THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE, ROMANCE, THE NEWS AND COMMERCE.

VOL. XIII. R. BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR. NO. 44 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, APRIL 11, 1857. TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 5.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

THE WILD KNIGHT;
OR,
THE UNKNOWN CRUSADER.

A TALE OF GERMANY IN THE DAYS OF THE EMPIRE.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNKNOWN AND HIS COMPANIONS.

At the time of which we write, the German Empire was in anything but a tranquil state. Rudolf of Hapsburg had been elected Emperor solely because he was a brave, unscrupulous man. He had accepted the imperial post with the pledge that he would be the blind, unswerving tool of the church. The Hanse Towns, or cities, were leagued together for mutual interest and protection, forming so many almost independent governments. The princes were in many instances reduced in power, holding the peasants in vassalage; while over all, and carrying terror even to the stout cities, were those wild, robber knights, whose castles, like the eyries of the eagles, were perched away upon mountains and rocks, from whence their reckless lords looked down in disdain upon all who dwelt beneath. In the East the crusades were drawing to a close. Baldwin II. had been driven from the throne of Byzantium; Jerusalem was in the hands of the sons of Islam; Antioch had been taken with the slaughter of seventeen thousand Christians, while a hundred thousand more were dragged away into slavery; Armenia had been overrun and conquered; a large portion of the army of Louis of France had either died of disease, or by the hand of the Saracen, and the remainder had returned to their Western homes. Yet there were many Christians in the Holy Land, and Gregory tried hard to send out more, but he did not succeed. Even his pliant tool, the Emperor Rudolf von Hapsburg, refused to obey him in this.

It was an afternoon in the spring of 1274. Since noon the heavens had been mantled with clouds, and now, when the sun had some four hours more to run, the wind had sprung up, and the signs were that rain was near at hand.

Upon the dubious road from Brakenhiem to Durmen, just in the north-eastern confines of the Black Forest, rode four armed men. He who rode in advance—for the path was so narrow here among the huge rocks that two could not ride abreast—was a noble-looking knight, tall and powerfully built, clothed in complete armor, with his heavy battle-axe slung in its becket by his side; his lance at rest, and his helm suspended from a loop at the saddle-bow. The armor was black as night—all save the gorget, which was of burnished gold, set with precious stones. Even the casque was of the sable hue, though the three brilliant ostrich feathers which floated from the top relieved the sombre effect. Upon his head he wore a light cap of purple velvet, with no other ornament than a rich brooch of gold and emeralds which secured the crimson ostrich plume in its place. His face was one of rare and startling beauty—one of those faces which awaken envy in the bosom of beaux, and quick love in the souls of the gentler sex. His brow was high and full, and about it and the fair neck floated glossy masses of light, sunny hair. His eyes were of a deep blue; his nose straight and finely carved; his lips fairly proportioned and wreathed with a half-waking smile, and his cheeks full, and flushed with the ruddy glow of health and vigor. His surcoat, which hung across the saddle, bore upon the breast the red cross of the Crusaders. His shield bore a strange device. It was a child killing an eagle, with this inscription:—"QUOD DEUS BENE VERTAT," which may be rendered,—*May God bring it to a good result.* The child was upon its knees, with one hand clasped about the eagle's throat, while the other held a raised dagger. The knight could not have been over thirty years of age, though he had surely seen much of life.

And now what is this bold knight's name? In Palestine he was known as "THE KNIGHT OF THE EAGLE," and finally, to shorten the name, he was called "THE BLACK EAGLE." Since he had left the Holy Land he had received one more cognomen:—"THE UNKNOWN CRUSADER." And yet, with all these, he still remains without a Christian name. Even when all Palestine and half of Europe were filled with the song and story of his wondrous prowess, they could not tell his name, whence he came, nor where he belonged. Upon that point he had reserved a stern silence; and the most that the Emperor Baldwin could gain from him when he bestowed the honor of knighthood was a simple declaration to this effect:—

"Upon my name there rests no stain—in my soul there is no wrong. I can look up to our God and implore his protection, feeling that I am worthy of it; and into the face of any honest knight of Christendom I can look without a blush. Call me *Sir Knight of the Eagle*, and the name shall not be dishonored."

Baldwin had asked no more. With the memory of the youth's feats of noble daring fresh upon him he gave him the magic stroke of the imperial sword, and with his own hands did he buckle on the golden spur.

Behind the Unknown rode a second knight of nearly the same age with the former. He was not quite so tall, but full as broad-shouldered, and possessed a goodly share of manly beauty. In fact he was a noble, handsome-looking knight, and such an one as no mistress would have gazed upon but with gratitude and pride. His armor was of the same pattern as his companion's, but not of the same color. The casque was of burnished steel, the gorget of the same, and the rest of the armor

THE UNKNOWN CRUSADER AND HIS COMPANIONS.

—the cuirass, the tasses, the brassets and the cuiskes—of green and gold in color, though of good, well-tried steel in substance. He also wore a velvet cap upon his head, and carried across his saddle the surcoat of the Crusader. His name was ENGELBERT VON MARBURG, and he was known throughout the Holy Land as one of the bravest knights that ever couched a lance against the infidel Saracen. His weapons were the same as those carried by the Unknown, save that they were not quite as heavy.

Behind Sir Engelbert rode the two esquires. They were also well armed, and wore the brassets and cuiskes in addition to the cuirass. Robert von Swingenhoffen was forty years of age; short and heavily framed; with great bones and sinews, almost like an ox; a red face and red hair; and possessed of much ready wit. He had served under Baldwin as an esquire, and during said service had performed many valorous deeds. One day, at the taking of a fortified town, he became surrounded by half a dozen stout Moslems, and had given himself up as lost, and said his prayers, when the Knight of the Eagle burst in upon him, slew his enemies, and bore him away in safety. Baldwin saw the deed, and from that hour he gave Robert von Swingenhoffen to the Black Eagle, to serve him as best he could. And he had been faithful. He loved his valiant master, and was ready at any moment to lay down his life for the good of him who had once saved it.

The fourth person in the party was Bernard von Schafferhausen. He was some five years younger than Robert, and very unlike him in frame, being very tall—all of six feet and a half, and rather slim for such height. Yet he was strong, and overrunning with fun and good nature. That he was a faithful and brave esquire Sir Engelbert well knew, for he had served the noble knight several years.

The road by which the party thus travelled was one of the wildest in the country. The giant trees stood thickly about where the surface was not of rock, and upon all hands the rugged mountains arose like sentinels of the empire.

At times the path was through a dense wood—then over a rugged cliff—then along a deep ravine—and anon upon the narrow pass that girded some perpendicular wall of rock. At length they reached a wide wood, through which the road was level and broad, and here Sir Engelbert rode up to his companion's side.

"This reminds me of the days agone, Sir Mystery," the second knight said, as he drew in the rein.

"Then you remember these scenes," returned the Unknown, in a half sad, meditative manner. But as he raised his eyes and met the generous gaze of his companion, the sadness passed away, and a smile broke over his own face.

"Aye—I understand," he added. "I was buried in an old thought when you came up. Yes, yes—these mountains and forests have a strange power over the soul of him whose first breath was drawn amid their romantic fastnesses."

"Then you were born in this section?" said Sir Engelbert, quickly.

"I said not so, my friend," returned the other. "And yet I will tell thee that I was born amid mountains and forests. But you, perhaps, know this section?"

"Yes—well. I was just twenty when I took up the cross and followed my noble father to the Holy Land. That was nine years ago. And look back upon the story of those years." The knight's voice sank to a tone of sadness as he proceeded: "Look upon the record of those nine years. Ah—'tis writ in blood! There were six hundred brave men followed my noble father from his stout castle of Marburg. Where are they now? Alas! where are they? One after another—and sometimes score after score,—have I seen them fall before the fatal arms of Islam. I saw the last—the last save good Bernard and myself—fall at Antioch! Ah!—Marburg has paid well for Christianity in Palestine!"

"So she has, Engelbert—so she has. I can look back upon a fearful picture, though the tale of blood affects me not exactly as it does yourself. I had no kindred in the Holy Land—those who fell there were my brethren only in the holy cause of the Cross. Yet it is a sad picture. Look at the seas of Christian blood spilled upon those arid plains—and, for what?"

"For what?" repeated Engelbert, looking eagerly into his companion's face.

"I'll tell thee for what," cried the Black Eagle, impetuously: "For the purpose of——"

"Speak on."

"Never mind. Perhaps 'twere best unsaid."

"But you do not mistrust me, my dear Myth. A hundred crowns that my thoughts run with your own."

The Black Knight gazed into his companion's face for a few moments, and then he said,—

"Then here it is: These crusades have been evil from first to last. They have sapped Europe of her best hearts—snatched from her the noblest of all her knights; while in the Holy Land only jealousy, enmity, and petty revenge have marked the course of the legions of the Cross. Kings have struck hands with assassins against kings, and brother hath turned foe to brother. Had a tenth part of the labor and life and wealth been devoted to the good of our own country, what a glorious result might have followed. Ah, Engelbert, as the heat of the battle passes away, and the morning of youth's ambition wanes, how experience will whisper its heresy into the ear of reason."

"You have spoken my mind to the very letter," exclaimed Sir Engelbert.

"Then we are both heretics," rejoined the other with a faint smile.

"Perhaps some would think so, were they to hear us."

After this there was a silence of some moments, which was at length broken by Sir Engelbert.

"You still mean to continue on to Aix la Chapelle, do you not?" he asked.

"Perhaps so," responded his companion.

"Do you not remember, once in Constantinople, you told me when we reached Germany I might know your name, and who you were?"

"Yes," returned the Black Knight, "I do remember it; but the time is not yet come. I must first see how the wind blows. If I mistake not, this Rudolf von Hapsburg, whom the Pope has made Emperor, is a—a—mere puppet."

"I think so, too," added Marburg. "And so you still mean to remain *The Unknown?*"

"For the present I must."

"It's curious. Here we have been companions in arms for six long years—slept beneath the same tent—eaten from the same buckler when we had no plates—fought together, side by side, through a hundred bloody battles—nursed each other in sickness—and cheered each other in health,—and yet, when I am asked—'Who is your friend?' I can only say '*The Unknown.*'"

"And the thousand Musselmen, when they pass *Al Sirat*, and are asked by the recording angel who sent them thither, must give the same answer," returned he of the Eagle, with a smile.

"Aye—more than a thousand."

"Stop, good Marburg. By my faith, I take no pleasure in thinking how many of the poor fellows I have slain."

"Yes, Sir Unknown, the wondrous deeds of your arm have given you a name which you cannot hide so long as you wear the device upon your shield."

The Black Knight gazed upon the device, but he did not speak.

"Aye," resumed the other, "and I doubt if there be a man, woman, or talking child in all the empire who has not spoken your name."

"My name?"

"Of the Eagle, I mean."

"Ah—yes. Think you so?"

"I know it. Ah—folks do not tell you all, for they soon learn that you seek no flattery; but to me they talk more freely. Mind you, we have passed through a hundred German towns already."

"I know it, good Marburg."

"And not a soul have we yet seen who knew you not."

"Well, well. So be it, then. But, thank God, they know no more. No, Sir Engelbert, my secret has been most truly kept. On all this earth there lives not a soul who can call me by name save myself. Have I not been true?"

"In faith you have," answered he of Marburg; and then, after a while, he added,—

"I have been thinking of the last Moslem you slew. It does not trouble you to think of that?"

"Ah, no," the Black Knight uttered, with a glowing eye, while his hand instinctively sank to his sword-hilt with a nervous clutch. "It was at Carthage, when I struck down the three stout emirs who had surrounded Prince Philip of France. And see—here is his royal father's gift in token of his gratitude." And as he spoke he placed his hand upon the richly jewelled gorget that hung upon his neck. "Ah," he continued, with a sad shake of the head, "Louis was a noble king; and when he died, a victim to the deadly vapors of the heathen land, France not only lost a true parent, but Christendom lost one of its best sons. He was one who went out from the promptings of religious duty, else he would never have undertaken his second crusade. However—the Pope made him a saint therefor, so he gained a spiritual elevation which a quiet rule at home could not have procured for him."

"Ha!" cried Sir Engelbert, just as the other ceased speaking, "look there."

The Unknown looked in the direction pointed out, and saw the turrets of a massive structure looming up against the darkened sky.

"What is it?" he asked.

"It is our good Convent of Saint Fulvia."

"A female establishment?"

"Yes—in part. There are some Benedictines there, I believe, who perform the out-door labor. By my faith, we are just in time, for see—the rain is already falling on the mountains."

"And are you sure they will give us welcome?" asked the Unknown, as he urged his horse on.

"How?" uttered Marburg, in surprise. "A convent, and offer the cold hand to Knights of the Holy Cross?"

"Perhaps I was wrong, but then you must remember that I have had little to do with affairs hereabouts."

"Aye—I understand, good Sir Mystery; but if you would pass for a German knight never ask again if a Crusader will find welcome in a German convent. Why, man, the meanest peasant may ask hospitality there."

After this the party spurred up, and reached the convent gates just as the great drops of rain began to fall.

CHAPTER II.

AGNES OF LUXEMBURG.

The Convent of St. Fulvia was situated within the precincts of Maulbroun, though some miles from any other habitation. It was upon a small piece of table land, where there were a few acres fit for cultivation; and this limited piece the Benedictines cultivated to so good a purpose, that the inhabitants of the building seldom had to go to any other market for fruits or vegetables.

Within the large ante-room of the convent sat a middle-aged woman, whose garb bespoke her to be the abbess, or lady superior of the place. She was not far from fifty; stout and rugged; and wore upon her face a look of deep piety and goodness of heart.

By the side of the abbess sat a maiden, who could not have seen more than nineteen years of life. She was of medium height; full and plump in form, with a skin of almost dazzling purity; her long, floating ringlets, of a deep, golden hue; and her eyes a mild, liquid blue. Her dress was far from being gaudy or showy, but yet it plainly bespoke her as one of gentle blood, and of noble family. Such was Agnes von Luxemburg, an orphan, and sole heiress to the broad estates of the late count, her father, who was an own brother of the abbess. And she was accounted the fairest maiden in Swabia, as she might well be, for surely no being of human mould could be more beautiful. It was not so much the faultless carving of her features, nor yet the voluptuous symmetry of her form, for the first was exceeded by the pure and joyous essence of her smiles, while the latter was over-balanced by the atmosphere of stern and lofty virtue that surrounded her like a halo. Few men had ever seen Agnes of Luxemburg without loving her; and at her feet had been laid half the estates of Swabia. But she had not yet looked with favor upon any of the aspirants, though that may be accounted for upon the fact that ere her father died he had expressed his wish that she should marry with the Count of Baden.

"Ah—there it comes," spoke the abbess, as the great drops of rain began to drive against the casements. "I knew it was near at hand; and our fire will not be out of place."

"No," returned Agnes, "for it is already cold and cheerless without. I wonder if there are travellers among the mountains?"

"Very likely there may be. I suppose you are wondering if the Count of Baden will come for you?"

"No—no!" quickly uttered the maiden, with a shudder.

"Ah, Agnes—I have your secret. You love another."

"No, my mother, you are mistaken there." This was spoken in a tone which left no room for doubt, at least in the mind of one who knew the speaker.

"But you do not love the Count Rudolf?"

Agnes hung down her head, and for a moment there was a tremulousness upon her. At length she raised her eyes to her companion's face, and in a tone of affectionate frankness she said:

"You have spoken the truth, lady. I cannot love him."

"Nor could I," rejoined the abbess, emphatically. "Not only is the seal of repulsiveness set upon his face, but he is a bad man."

"You are right again, lady."

"Then of course you will not become his wife?"

"Oh—I know not what to do!" the maiden cried, resting her head upon her companion's shoulder, and throwing her arms about her neck.

"Then let me advise you," said the abbess, drawing the beautiful girl more closely to her bosom, and speaking in gentle tones: "You are young and handsome. Your father's wish is left upon record that you should marry with Rudolf von Baden—*when* you were ready to wed. I can appreciate your feelings, in having turned away the scores of noble knights that have knelt at your feet."

"I did not love them, mother—indeed I did not."

"But among them all may there not have been one whom you would have loved, had you not been bound by this plan of your father's?"

"I will not deny it."

"Then come and wed with our sisterhood."

The maiden started as though something had frightened her. The abbess saw the movement, and she quickly comprehended its meaning.

"Does it make you tremble?" she asked.

"Oh! I am not prepared to answer now. I am not fit for communion with your holy sisterhood."

"Then are there none on earth fit. Ah, Agnes, I fear your pride prompted that speech."

"My pride?"

"Yes, my child; for you must know that you are among the purest of our daughters."

"Well, well—let it pass now. I am not ready to answer such a question."

"And yet you know your father bade me to watch over you."

"Because you were his own sister, and he knew you loved me."

"Aye," added the abbess, imprinting a warm kiss upon the girl's fair brow as she spoke, "and he knew I should always love you. But—— Hark! What sound is that?"

In a few moments more the old porter appeared, and announced that two knights of the Cross and their esquires asked for shelter from the storm.

"Crusaders—are they?"

"They are."

"And did ye leave them at the gate?"

"I did."

"Out, thick-head, and lead them in quickly! Leave two knights of the Holy Cross in the storm with a shelter under their very eyes! Away—and lead them hither at once! and then see that their horses are cared for."

The porter retired, and then the abbess turned to Agnes.

"You will stay, my sweet child, and help me entertain the noble knights?"

"Certainly I will. Agnes of Luxemburg holds not her hands nor purse from the brave soldiers of the Cross." The maiden's eyes burned with a generous glow as she spoke, and upon her cheeks arose a rich flush of grateful emotion. Her father had made one crusade, and from his lips she had learned the fearful story of the dangers and privations which the devoted knights of the Cross had to suffer.

"Welcome, noble sirs, and God's blessing be upon you!" spoke the abbess, as she arose to greet the strangers.

"We thank thee, lady; and will pray Heaven to bless this house!" responded the Black Knight.

"And your esquires—where are they?"

"With the groom, lady. They will find welcome with the porter, I think."

"As you will. If they choose the porter's lodge, so be it."

"Her Agnes was intended at the abbess confided, as her guests to an adjoining apartment, which they reached by aside their armor. When they had done this, their saddle forms were shown to better advantage. The Unknown was habited in a garb of black velvet throughout, which, though it possessed a somber look, yet gave to his form and feature a lofty dignity and grandeur. His features were pale was of a less grave character, though he from cloth or gaudy. When they returned to the large sitting-room, even the abbess was startled by the strange beauty of her guest, more particularly did she notice her eyes upon the face of the Unknown; and it was not until he of Montgomery spoke that she recovered herself.

"Your good convent was placed in the proper spot for us on this particular occasion," he said.

"So I hope it may ever be for the good of noble knights like you. This is the Convent of Saint Fabvia, and I am its abbess."

"And I am called Engelbert of Marburg. And," he added, with a smile, "my companion is one you can only know as you see him. He is *The Knight of the Black.*"

"How?" cried the abbess, while Agnes started with mingled surprise and terror. "The noble Knight of the Eagle?—He of whom we have heard so much?—The servant of the Baldric, of Cave, of Broad-sheep, and of even whole cities?"

"The same, lady."

"Hah!" spoke the Unknown, with a faint smile. "I, as yet can say, I pray thee. Lay no more flattery upon me."

"If I do," replied the abbess quickly, "I'll beg thy pardon beforehand, but let me introduce my guests to the Knight of Germany."

Sir Engelbert took the maiden's hand, and the smiled sweetly upon him as he presented them. Then the Black Knight approached, and his hand trembled as he took that of the beautiful Agnes, and the smile fled from her lips, and a tremor shook her frame. For the first time in her life, she could not tell whence came the quick emotion; only she felt the slight trembling of the Knight's hand, after even rested within his own, and saw the sudden flight that bounded in his deep blue eyes.

Supper was soon prepared, and, after the meal was over the party returned to the large room. The Unknown was the last one to be seated, and if he would at near the cheerful fire, he must take the only empty stool, and that was close by Agnes. He took it, and ere long they were deeply interesting their adventures to the willing listeners.

As the evening advanced the Unknown turned his attention more particularly to the ladies, and with eager, generous looks, she listened to him. At her own request, he told her of his adventures, while the maiden was overcome with the deepest silence.

"And now," said the maiden, after the knight had told her of his last exploit, "I am sure you must be charmed by the thought that you are soon to return to your friends."

"Friends?" repeated he, in a low, sad tone. "Ah—my friends are——. But I want my list. The reception lobby will be crowded, and I will not believe that your generous hospitality is extended without some spark of friendship."

"Indeed, sir knight," uttered Agnes, speaking from her seated position, and looking thought, "you may be sure of that. My own poor life would be baldly given if 'twere to save and secure thine."

The Unknown started as those sweet words fell upon his ear, and for the moment the dark shade all left his face, and his heart seemed to have stopped its beating. But was only for the fleetest moment, and the first sound of the heart gave a true response to the whole frame.

"Hold, lady," he said, as the fair girl attempted to modify what she had let fall from her lips, and from the heart. "do not take back those words. They shall never leave my ears with life and reason last. They shall be with me to cheer and console me, and to give nerve to my arm, and strength to my heart. As true as my religion, they are the sweetest words that have dropped upon my ear since my dying mother prayed over her little burden upon my child head and blessed me. Do not speak them—or rather, lady, they only came from a hope to please. But if they came from the heart, then let them be mine."

Agnes sat down as he had thus spoke the fair girl turned, with a beaming, generous look. "Had my self-respecting from the heart, you would never have heard them. The heart set them free are the tender pulsed but unbidden by the lips."

"Thank you, lady; and henceforth you may rest assured that there is one knight who will protect the honor of your name with his life. And though, for the present, circumstances prevent me from revealing my name, yet, when the time comes when I say, that no stain rests upon me."

Agnes bowed her head, and her whole frame trembled, but soon she recovered her composure, and once more her conversation was free and frank.

It was quite late when the party separated. An old maid was called, who conducted the ladies each to their chamber, and when they were left alone together Agnes was the first to say some thing.

Engelbert was the first to speak;

"By my knightly vows, Sir Mystery, I'll swear that then had some part in the heart of the heiress of Luxemburg."

"Come, my fearless, Engelbert," returned the other, with a slight thrill upon his cheek.

"Fearless, my knightly vows! Think I am blind? Dost think some ears and eyes have both been powers of conveying intelligence to the mind? Upon my faith, I do. Why, when the maiden name pleased, nor one more happy in the society of men than. But what say you, my friend? Have the charms of the lady Agnes touched thy heart?"

"You jest, Engelbert."

"Upon my soul, I do not."

"Then—"

"And the abbess tells me she is as pure and good as she is lovely."

"Then the abbess knows her well?"

"Aye—she knows her very well."

"And I suppose the maiden is engaged."

"Not exactly. The father, before he died, expressed the wish, or half the wish, that she and Count Albert, of Cave, should, when she got ready to marry, become the wife of the Count of Berlin; but her mind tells me she hates the Count."

The Unknown sat for a few minutes and gazed out into the gloom.

"What do you see out there?" his companion asked.

"Shadows and stars!" the stout knight returned. And when he looked once more upon his friend, his face was pale, and there had been a tear upon his cheek, for he well-nigh was still visible.

Engelbert knew that his companion had something thought upon him, and he said no more upon the subject he had broached. They both knelt before the crucifix which stood within a niche in the wall, and having said their prayers, and received the most sacred of their knightly vows, they retired.

Had the knight of the Eagle told the truth, he would have said that he loved the gentle Agnes of Luxemburg. He would have confessed that his heart had been that evening moved as it was never moved in his life. But he could not—he dared not such a confession at this.

And how was it with the maiden? Why did the good abbess gaze upon her so strangely, and shake her head so unceasingly? It was because she saw very plainly that the heart of the beautiful girl had at length fallen into captivity.

"Come, my child," the loving soul urged, after all other means of gaining her confession had failed,—"why can be trust me? Would you not have one true friend in whose house and love you can confide?"

"Yes—yes, most Agatha; and I will tell thee the truth. I do love him!"

"Noble, generous!" cried the abbess, as she clasped the maiden to her bosom, "I knew I was not mistaken. But I wonder not. He is a gallant knight and a true man. He seems in every mouth, and a thousand songs tell his praise."

"Do you know who he is under the maiden asked, gazing up with an eager look.

"No, my child; I do not. I can think of nothing touching the point to be spoken of now. He has told me nothing, and I do not know that I have any right to inquire. He is a true knight, better than many whose good arm honor; so rest easy on that score."

"Then you do not blame me? You will not betray me?" murmured Agnes, eagerly and hopefully.

"No, no, my love. Far from it. The hour may come when even Agatha will be in the way."

"How then? How then?" spoke the maiden as she clung to the neck of her friend, and wept in the fervorance of the first wild passion of her young heart.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNKNOWN KNIGHTS.

The two knights were roused in the morning by a loud knocking at their door, and upon opening it they found the same monk there, who had conducted them to their rooms.

"Noble sirs," the old man cried, "a large party of knights have come to the convent—"

"How?" uttered the Unknown. "Rob a monastery? Rob the house of devotion? Are they—"

"Yes, noble sir. They are now at the gate and demand admittance."

"How many of them?"

"Fifteen, sir."

"Then buston down and tell the good lady abbess that we will be quickly with her. By Saint Paul!" he exclaimed, as the monk left the room, "it is possible that knighthood has come to this?"

"Ah," replied Engelbert, "there are many false knights are bad men."

"I have yet to learn of such a monastery; but a convent—a house of women—I had thought would be free from their service."

"Yet there is gold and silver in store."

"Never mind. But I am mistaken if the darkened cloud of evil has not fallen upon the house of Silber?"

By the time the two crusaders descended to the apartment where they had set the evening before, and there they found not only the abbess and Agnes, but several other women, who had been taken the full rest.

"How do you?" asked he of the Eagle, as he entered the room.

"If you had bear that noble at our gates, sir?" the abbess returned. "That wicked knight, Otto von Metzinger, at the head of his companions, demands admittance here."

"But he does not surely mean to rob you?"

"Yes, sir. He says that we have the wicked-ness of those men. Yet there are few who would do this thing. That noble knight and recluse man of them all—the Wild Knight of Wertenberg—would never attack the house of women. He rules in his own way here. As to our holy religion, they are the sweetest words that have dropped upon my ear since my dying mother prayed over her little burden upon my child head and blessed me. Do not speak them—or rather, lady, they only came from a hope to please. But if they came from the heart, then let them be mine."

Agnes sat down as he had thus spoke the fair girl turned, with a beaming, generous look. "Had my self-respecting from the heart, you would never have heard them. The heart set them free are the tender pulsed but unbidden by the lips."

"Thank you, lady; and henceforth you may rest assured that there is one knight who will protect the honor of your name with his life. And though, for the present, circumstances prevent me from revealing my name, yet, when the time comes when I say, that no stain rests upon me."

Agnes bowed her head, and her whole frame trembled, but soon she recovered her composure, and once more her conversation was free and frank.

It was quite late when the party separated. An old maid was called, who conducted the ladies each to their chamber, and when they were left alone together Agnes was the first to say some thing.

Engelbert was the first to speak;

"By my knightly vows, Sir Mystery, I'll swear that then had some part in the heart of the heiress of Luxemburg."

"Come, my fearless, Engelbert," returned the other, with a slight thrill upon his cheek.

"Fearless, my knightly vows! Think I am blind? Dost think some ears and eyes have both been powers of conveying intelligence to the mind? Upon my faith, I do. When the maiden name pleased, nor one more happy in the society of men than. But what say you, my friend? Have the charms of the lady Agnes touched thy heart?"

"You jest, Engelbert."

"Upon my soul, I do not."

"Then—"

"And the abbess tells me she is as pure and good as she is lovely."

"Then the abbess knows her well?"

"Aye—she knows her very well."

"And I suppose the maiden is engaged."

"Not exactly. The father, before he died, expressed the wish, or half the wish, that she and Count Albert, of Cave, should, when she got ready to marry, become the wife of the Count of Berlin; but her mind tells me she hates the Count."

The Unknown sat for a few minutes and gazed out into the gloom.

"What do you see out there?" his companion asked.

"Shadows and stars!" the stout knight returned. And when he looked once more upon his friend, his face was pale, and there had been a tear upon his cheek, for he well-nigh was still visible.

Engelbert knew that his companion had something thought upon him, and he said no more upon the subject he had broached. They both knelt before the crucifix which stood within a niche in the wall, and having said their prayers, and received the most sacred of their knightly vows, they retired.

The porter led the way to the small wicket in which there was a square piece of chain netting. Through this the Black Knight could count the soldiers. There were two knights and fourteen men-at-arms—the latter on foot, and armed with cross-bows and swords, and wearing the usual armor of the foot-soldiers of the period—round shields of iron with deep capes behind; coifs-armor of sleeves, with a point at the neck, thus completing the piece of a gorget; but no hauberts or coiled shirts of mail. Just in front of the knights, and by their side, was a tall, powerful man, and as he saw were his visor up the crusader could see that he had a bold, red look. The other knight, the porter said, was Sir John von Malsbach; and that bright knight was the one who had taken the last knight of the empire for his evil deeds, but particularly for having robbed a convent of its gold and silver.

"Call out your name," said the unknown, "and have them arranged in the court-yard to be ready for me when my chance to dodge in. Now, Sir Engelbert, we will out upon them, while Robert and Gerhard keep the gate and the postern."

Thus speaking the Black Knight closed his visor, and having loosened his axe, and touched his lance, he called upon the porter to throw back the gate. As the way was thus opened, six of the men-at-arms were seen hanging up a heavy log with which they meant to batter down the wicket. The Unknown saw this, and with a quick motion of his head they beheld this unexpected presence was one of knights. Sir John of Malsbach was the first to recognize another noble spoke;

"Hah, Sir Knights—what would ye here?"

"Who are you that dares question Otto of Metzinger?" the robber retorted. "Raise thy visor that I may see thy face."

"Not to thee until I know thy business: and then only at the point of my lance. I have the right of a protector of the holy place. Now tell me your business, or else your power and refreshment, and next it, then shall find it."

"I do seek refreshment, mother—such refreshment as the convent can give me. Have ye gold?"

"Then you have come to rob these women?"

"Call it as you please. I have come to remove the wicked gold stored up here, the thoughts of those holy people should not be on the earth. I'll take them of their gold and silver they'll have more in heaven. Now, sir knight, will you open the gate, ha, ha. Then bust thine answer. Now up with the gate!"

"Not to Otto von Metzinger, while the bars of the gate are in upon him, and base robb'ry engages upon those gates."

"Ho, ho, ho! Vallant—thus chalnet the women for thine own, eh? Not open to Otto of Metzinger? Then I'll have it open, or I'll have your heart's at thee! What! ho, men-at-arms! Throw those two clowns, while Sir John and myself un-Paint the wicket—we'll have it open!"

"Beware, Sir Otto!" cried the Unknown as he grasped his battle-axe more firmly in his right arm. "You are unharmed now in body, and I would have you remain so; but if you make such a run-ning enough. God defend the right!"

The knight of Metzinger was not to calm behind you. Just stand where you are and I'll rob thee with as I would a mad dog."

As Sir Otto spoke he gathered up his rein, and put spurs to his horse; and with his impious sword in his hand he was about to make his way out.

"*God and St. Fabia!*" shouted the Unknown, as he heard himself for the shock. He did not move his horse, but sat firmly in his seat, with his keen eye upon the robber, and set his lance for the guard. He felt the power of a giant in his good arm, and he did not fear to have to do with a powerful knight only rushed upon defeat. He had resolved to make a sharp charge to the main body and even his horse had been so thoroughly trained as to delight in the battle, and recline man.

With a firm hand the Black Eagle held his lance, and as the robber came dashing upon him a quick turn and wheel was made, and the point was at his side, and at the same moment his lance, with a powerful thrust, passed through the right arm and out of the robber's weapon over the right shoulder. Sir Otto uttered a shout of pain and rage, and Sir Otto's helm just below the visor and rolled him from his horse upon the ground. Almost at the same moment Sir John von Malsbach fell beneath the stroke of Engelbert.

The Unknown sprang from his saddle, and placed his sword at the throat of the fallen knight.

"Your right hand, or your life!" he cried.

"But, to whom?" asked Otto, in struggling tones.

"To the *Black Eagle of Palestine!*" shouted our hero.

"Mercy!" gasped the vanquished man. "Why didn't you tell me so?"

"But do you yield?"

"Yes!"

"And if I spare thee, will thou give me thine oath that thou will not trouble this abbey more?"

"The terms are hard."

"Then fight again, knight! Remember—I would kill thee as quickly as I would any other robber!"

"Spare me!" groaned Otto.

"Then upon thy knees and take the oath. That is the oath!"

Otto unbuckled a while, but at length he got upon his knees, and with the cross of the crusaders he swore before him that he would never trouble the convent.

"Well done! Sir Otto von Metzinger. Now call thy men-at-arms and give them the order of some such legitimate game."

The knight arose the two equires and been doing a heavy work among the men-at-arms. Robert and Gerhard were there, and the rest were scattered there, while Bernard stalked about like a dark among frogs. Their long experience against the Turks and Moors had given them a coolness of which their huddling adversaries knew nothing. Their long battle-axes were also very effective, while most of the others were either smaller upon their swords, or crawling away with crushed and aching heads.

Sir John von Malsbach, as soon as he knew who his opponent was, threw down his sword and his companion had taken, and then they were allowed to rise. Engelbert took the oath of the knight, and his cruelty and threats profitably.

"Now, Sir Otto, Sir Crusaders, you have contributed into a nice mess, and you shall find to your cost. If you get out of those mountains with a sad heart, you'll be fortunate."

With this threat upon his lips, the robber-knight turned to his men-at-arms and commanded them to their senses, and ere long the whole party rode off over the three dead men, their bodies being left for the monks to dispose of.

Blessings, deep and sincere, were showered upon the two crusaders when they returned to the convent; and when they heard of the oath they had made the unmerciful robber, the abbess could not speak her gratitude.

A hearty breakfast was eaten, and after this the two knights dispatch of their intentions of departing. The storm of the previous evening had passed away, and the air of the spring morning was fresh and inspiring.

"Do you go near Stuttgart?" the abbess asked.

"Directly thither," the Black Knight answered. "I think we can easily reach it before dark if your horses are strong."

"Certainly."

"I have a favor to ask of thee," the abbess remarked, addressing him of the Eagle. "The Lady Agnes had been for several days watching for some friends who had promised to come and conduct her to Stuttgart, where she would go to see her cousins, Constance of Baden, and Blanche of Wertenberg. They may not come for a long while, and if you will accept the charge I shall give her into thy keeping, for safe delivery at the castle of Everhard von Wertenberg."

"*Eberhard von Wertenberg!* repeated the Black Eagle, "the Wild Knight of Swabia?"

"Yes, Sir Crusader. He is surely the wildest knight in all Christendom; and the most jealous of restraint. Even the Emperor he sets at defiance, and claims all mankind for his foes. He is a brave, generous, and a consist of mine in fact. He stands at the head of the robber knights of the empire, but he is a brave man, and would scorn a mean action. He would lie down and die of starvation rather than rob a woman; and his breast he would have to the sword ere he would strike a feeble foe. So sure he will give thee a hearty welcome if you come and his purpose. Just with them accept the charge?"

"Even the Black Eagle will with it!"

"She does."

"Then I accept the trust, and you may feel that you hold my life in pledge for her safety."

"I understand," returned the abbess, with a smile, and then speaking of the matter.

Ere long Agnes von Luxemburg entered the knights—all prepared for her journey; and both the knights started as they beheld her strange beauty. Her dress was of the richest, her purple velvet was bordered with gold, and the jaunty velvet cap, with its drooping ostrich plume, was the richest upon the head that was ever a lady. She wore a small dagger in her girdle, and her right hand carried a light whip. In fact, she was a noble lark, with a mixture of the Arabian in its blood, and appeared to be full of life. She took her kind abbess, and when she had been assisted to her saddle, the pleased animal capered and pranced, showing her delight at her burden.

"Now, mind you," said the abbess, once more addressing the Black Knight, "only you must be safe of Everhard the Lady Agnes is my charge to you."

"Then the Wild Knight has some control over her," the Black Eagle said, in a tone so low that only the abbess could hear it.

A dark cloth rested upon the face of the abbess, but the Knight passed through her frame as she replied—

"Yes—he is his guardian—made so by my intercession. But have no fear. He is a noble man."

Once more our hero promised to watch well his charge, and then the party moved on their way.

Agnes of Luxemburg smiled as she caught the last glimpse of her aunt through the trees, and then, for awhile, she was lost in deep thought.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

BE GUARDED.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

What a frightful thing is misplaced confidence. There are few agonies so keen, so cruel, as are the soul-torture of disappointed affection, when united by some glamour of the mind, or some mirage of the imagination,) has been won to open the heart entirely to give itself up unreservedly to lay bare to sight things as sacred as a dead mother's memory, or as dear as the memory of a dying Love; as jealously guarded as the fire of one's own life-blood. Many a heart that is now guarded and helpless bear it might be trodden down by the iron heel of scorn; or pierced through and through by the poisoned arrows of derision. This indeed, is suspicion; and the suffering which is caused by it is terrible to those of the fellows of our trust in the noblenes of the race of Columbia. No one deserves to be loved who looked on the famous "Aztec children," without inwardly exclaiming, "these are surely dowdified children of the Heavenly Father!"

GERMAN BURIAL CUSTOM.

The German people are methodical in compleated and minutiæ, and all persons of high birth are obliged to conform to it by the strictest rule. Among the sites which precede burial is one which, trying as it caused fail to prove to the principal, serves as a consolation to the living, and to tranquillize the minds of the survivors. It is ascertained that the soul should abide with the four-and-twenty hours the corpse remains under the roof where the death has taken place, and while there all the affecting offices necessary to its final burial are performed. The time elapsed, it is carried to the church, and there, in the wedding-sheet, upon a bed in the inner apartment of a low building, which is called the leichenhaus, remain only of two rooms. This is which the body is deposited, and the other for the reception of mourners and no other furniture than the bed itself and a bell-rope, the end of which is placed in the hands of the corpse. The bell-rope passes out by a small hinge in the text room, and which is thence called the Thatcher of the Dead. The object of which is, cause that the friends of an individual may have been mistaken for a sudden lethargy for death, and that the patient should awake during the night (for the body must remain all night in this gloomy cottage), and consequently awaken by his may make necessarily rings the bell, and be obtained assistance help. It is unusual even in the nearest relative to keep this dreary watch; and, from a beautiful sentiment, which must almost tend to reconcile the watcher to his duty, it is said to be fated to watch three alone, that it may be he who has been in better ages, but were most frequently lodged in the same breast, and were, as it were, held in hand by the glory of the world's great Ruler, and the benefit of mankind.

PRIMEVAL POETS.

It is probable that the first poets were found at the altar, that they employed their talents in adorning and animating the worship of their gods: the spirit of poetry and religion reciprocally rendered each other, devotion inspired poetry, and poetry exalted devotion; the most sublime conceptions were put to the most noble use; purity of will, and fineness of understanding, were not such strangers as they have been in latter ages, but were most frequently lodged in the same breast, and were, as it were, held in hand by the glory of the world's great Ruler, and the benefit of mankind.

FREEDOM'S LAND.

BY C. D. STUART.

I love the land where Freedom dwells
Though black its hills and bare its dells,
And wintry cold its skies;
There, flashing out the tyrant's rod,
Man wears the insignia of his God,
An eagle in Paradise.

The rudest rock and desert sand,
Grow fertile as a garden land,
If Freedom's seed is there;
She gives the earth a brighter green,
She lends the waves a fairer sheen—
Before rock and desert bare.

There every man's of noble birth,
A God-made sovereign of the earth,
Within his own domain;
And kings may clash, and priests may bar,
They cannot bind it ever mair,
Where Freedom breaks the chain.

I love the land where Freedom dwells,
The fame of Washington and Tell,
Hofers and Bethune;
The land where Sin gets wearing bright,
To fling against oppression's night
The glow of Freedom's shine!

THE RECONCILIATION.

A STORY OF TWO PROUD HEARTS.

BY MARY W. STANLEY STRONG.

CHAPTER I.

A mild May morning, fresh, and pleasant, and bright; that air full of the sweet scent of flowers, the wild drowsy lilting up their heads in the sunshine; and the green leaves rustling and waving in the woods, as if they were whispering secrets to the gentle wind that stirred them.

It was a lovely day—a day to be happy in. And yet a sadness look was visible on the sweet face of Faith Egerton as she left the door of her home, and went slowly down the graveled walk that led to the road gate.

Her home—the home of her husband and children—was a pretty brown house covering, overlying with vines, and surrounded by beds of fragrant flowers. Behind the house was a level and beautiful grove, in the cool recesses of which often lain, as a child, and vaulated the flickering light and shade come upon the ground through the leaves. Most years of Faith, as well as those later ones, had been spent in this quiet place. Here she was born—here her kind mother had died—here she had lived with a dear and only brother—here she had married her boy-love, and seen her children springing up around her, and here she hoped to close her days, with all the old and familiar scenes smiling in beauty around her.

She leaned against the little gate, and looked wistfully up the road. She was waiting there for the coming of her best and earliest friend, and the sound of whose name her sister, and next sister's baby-boy had often heard her whisper in her sleep, and dubbed sway again. The new comer did not see Faith for a moment, as screened was she by the interest of a wild rose bush that grew by the gate. She took off her travelling hat, exposing a broad high forehead, shaded by silky masses of black hair, a face well-featured, but grave and stern, and full of thought, and dark eyes, whose glances were kind, and whose smile was beautiful.

How strange a contrast between these two women. The one fair-haired and soft-eyed, with a meek and quiet face, on whose features contentment and home happiness was most plainly stamped; the other dark, and proud, and self-sustained, with a look that said to the most careless observer, "Oh, I have suffered!" The one the lady and a fair summer's day, with only now and then a light and happy cloud; to the other—oh, what to her, but a bleak and stormy winter, since everything she loved laid down, and shivered, and died? And yet they were friends—almost more than sisters in life—and side by side they had sat at school, and played at love, in the childhood that lay behind them!

The tears sprang unbidden to the eyes of Faith Egerton, as she saw the maiden of old, and knew that the young girl regarded the scene around her, like lifted the hand to shield her eyes, and stepped out beside her.

"Gertrude—Gertrude Alwynne—can't you speak to me?"

"Faith, dear Faith, is it you?"

They were clasped in each other's arms at once, Faith wept bitterly, but Gertrude was pale and calm, and considered the fair hair of her friend with a caressing gesture, such as one might use to soothe a little child.

"Come, Faith," she said at last, as if weary of her tears; "this is not a merry welcome to give me after so long a journey. I do hope I never liked to see you cry."

"But you are changed—so changed, Gertrude."

"Well, and if I am! It is six years since we met, dear Faith, and they have not been marked with your traces for me. You must not expect me to be quite the same as formerly—you must not. Life changes us all, you know."

"I know," answered Faith, sadly. "But I never knew it so well until now."

"Well, we will not dwell on that drop. And now are you not going to ask me to after my journey from London?"

"Pray, forgive me," said Faith, blushing at her inattention. "I will show you to your chamber myself. Is that your only trunk on the coach?"

They went up the yard together. Two fair-haired children met the elder one, to greet them. The youngest, a boy of some two summers, held up his little hands to Miss Alwynne with a sunny smile. She stooped down and caught the little arms, and walked along through the hall with Faith.

"Are these your only ones?" she asked.

"Yes, and they are more than enough for me," replied the mother, looking at the children with a fond smile that betrayed how little the "trouble" was felt.

Gertrude sighed.

"I don't know, Faith," she said, brokenly. "Every one calls me cold and proud; perhaps I am. But when I take a little innocent child into my arms, something stirs in my heart that nothing else can touch. I might have been a better and a happier woman, Faith, if I had married."

This time it was Faith that sighed.

"You know well what my favorite plan always was, Gertrude. If you had only married my brother—"

"Oh, Faith, spare me," was the half-laughing answer.

"But you would have loved him if you had only seen him," persisted Faith. "He is so noble, so generous, so handsome. He is only my half-brother, you know; but if he had been my own, I could not have loved him better."

By this time they had reached the room which had been fitted up for Gertrude.

"Why, you have made a little Paradise for me," she said, with a pleased smile, as she looked around the chamber. "I shall never want to leave you, Faith."

"So my pains of mine will keep you, I am content."

"But, Faith," said Miss Alwynne, detaining her friend as she was about to leave the room; "I never knew before that your brother was only a half-brother. Your maiden name was Faith Anderson; your what was his?"

"Walter Rosson. He was the son of my step-mother. My own mother died when I was very young."

"What! what was his name?"

The tone was sharp and impatient, but the speaker's face was turned away from Faith.

"Walter Rosson. My boy is named for him—Walter Rosson Egerton."

The jewelled hand that had been playing with the child's curls, was drawn away as if a serpent had stung it, and Gertrude turned a white and rigid face toward her friend, as the quick boy-down was pointed to the door.

"Gertrude, what ails you? Are you ill?" cried Faith, in terror. She caught the bell-rope in her hand, but Miss Alwynne grasped her arm firmly.

"Walter Rosson. My boy is named for him—Walter Rosson Egerton."

The jewelled hand that had been playing with the child's curls

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 11.

OUR OFFICE TERMS.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs are allowed an eighth copies at $1.50. The only mode we HAVE OF A club of eight copies, and one at one time), will be mailed to a copy free. It will be useless for parties to write us inquiring in our taking large clubs at lower rates, as our single family paper like the LEDGER, containing as much reading matter as any two of the weekly papers, can not be sold for less than any club formed in a town where there are only a few copies sold. Specimen numbers sent gratuitously in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year.

POST-OFFICE ORDERS.—We are in certain wildfire. Mr. Post-Office orders can be had, and we prefer any mode of them for subscriptions to the LEDGER. We do not object to receive bills on rare occasions, or money in letters, although we feel upon them on a stranger, as it is difficult to ask them. It is a mistake into that the Post-Office will pay or redress losses of any kind. We will not REFER WORK of his own stamps change! Who will remain then there's credit!

NO TRAVELLING AGENTS.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends hereafter to act as such in our line down at a venture. The best way is to buy paper is at the book and periodical stores; but if you happen to live within twelve miles of New-York send us your orders, and we will send it to you.

WE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR all monies sent us in communications, and not otherwise. In order that the paper is sure a letter registered at any post-office—and the receipt for the money obtained from the postmaster.

REJECTED MANUSCRIPTS.—We will not be responsible for rejected manuscripts.

COLD VICTUALS!

Mr. Cobb's New Story, which we commence this week, is one of the most beautiful and enchanting productions that ever emanated from the popular pen. Mr. Cobb, as we have repeatedly stated, now writes only for the LEDGER; but as great is his popularity as a Penny-Journals daily paper, and one other concern, seeing they cannot get any of his new tales are publishing some of his old ones. We do not blame them; observing mercenary actions stand upon necessity—if they cannot sit down on an equality at the table, they can "grub" at the *odd* outside! Such is poor human nature the world over.

SPRING SPIRITS.

Dull of sight and acute must be the soul that can perceive no divine and beautiful spirits in the atmosphere of a Spring morning. The Universe is full of spirits; everywhere is spirit-land. In spring time, Life pushes and struggles, not only in visible forms, but in the invisible of nature, above and around us. Let us go out, then, from from the frowsed mart, and see and hear if there be no spirits abroad. Bright and radiant spirits of air, winged with the golden light of day, and their melodious with the sweet breath of heaven! Spirits of earth, unfolding in their new blossoms, in reviving verdure, in bird-songs in the lifting of the leaves by soft, balmy winds, and in the upshooting of life where the plough has stirred the ground, and the hand of man scattered the seed of harvests. Spirits of all sorts and degrees, varying sun, rushing rivers, silvery-sounding brooks, and still springs, that sparkle under the sun, and moon like calm hearts thrilled with serene joy.

At least the Spirit of God is everywhere, living and blessed. And if angels walk not abroad in the beauty and aroma of Spring, then is the sweetest flesh the purest flesh, and the divinest dream of the human heart, since the world began, a withering cheat. Can man behold and commune best himself—a felt, but invisible spirit, exhibited in human form—and shudder at all forms are sinful and mighty spirits, some unfolding to the eye, some to the ear, and some to the heart, but all beings and beautiful in their own time, and all adapted to high and holy purposes. Why infuse the fires of earth, fragrance, and all the color by the way-side as in the flower?—surely not the vile little flowers only. There is a spirit in the flower a spirit fraught with as much of heaven, that we bind it on the brow of death, to companion, as it were, this sole color and blossom and perfume from its earth-bonds. And so all the Spring-day fields fashion with spirits fresh-prints of angels bearing the beauty, the blessing, and the love of God, and drawing their lovelily in the moral peaks of sense.

Beautiful Spring-spirits, ye that hold us in childhood, halfway within delight under azure skies, in flower-beds, and by the shores of bright waters! in blessed reveries, uplifting us far beyond the cloud, when the sunbeams streamed through the May morning, or lay shattered on the sea, in radiant noon; in day and night dreams, peopled, with passionate longings and divine joys. Oh, Spirits! gentle, and sorry, and beautiful, all God's relations and messengers are, be with us, and with Summer-comers, until the Summer is full, and we remove these masks of form and sense, and commingle us, face to face.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

We never pass along the streets, at the hours when the children are let out from school, or are being reunited, by the feeble frames and dull eyes of many of them presented to our notice, of the immense importance of this subject, and of our selfish neglect to cause the Lessons, as it finds its way into thousands of families, to be read and seen and heard. Small parents and teachers have become increasingly weakened in the eyes.

Apart from the diseases of the body which must follow the neglect of physical education on some men, it is folly to anticipate true mental culture of a sound body. *There can be no sound mind without a sound body.*

We should now speaking of the children of the poor, the nature of whose employments assault fine and ill-ventilated houses—is also a theme calling for frequent attention. We allude to the children of all classes, and especially with reference to their management at school.

We need to go back a little, and learn of the ancients on this head. They made their gymnasiums and their athletic games matters of public concern. So should we, in our schools at least, do the same. And we should do everything else that may be needed to develope bone and muscle and *strength of method also*, in our children, and so cultivate and one department of their nature at the expense of another, but the whole.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by HENRY HOWARD, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New-York.

THE CHERUB IN THE OMNIBUS.

They stepped in together—the man and his wife —honest, healthy country-folk. She—rosy and plump; he—stalwart, broad-chested and strong-limbed. Unlooked-for and welcome to be, it might not have noticed them particularly, but they had a baby; and such a baby! None of your fashion-by-day abortions, but a fresh-and-blood baby—a baby in nature one's month water—aye, and eye, *too!* Such a baby as might have been born in the garden of Eden, had the serpent never crept in; born of parents fed on strawberries and pomegranates—pure in soul—pure in body—and healthy and vigorous as partly else can be.

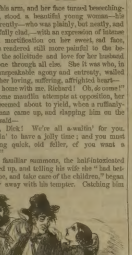
Such a baby! such eyes!—such a skin—such bewildering lips—such a heaven-born smile! my eyes overflowed as I looked at it. I was not worthy to hold that baby, but my heart yearned for it, and I held out my hands invitingly.

See! the little trusting thing leaps from its father's arms and sits smiling on my knee. All little baby! I am almost ashamed to say from mine; is it not enough that my soul is on its knees to you? Is it not enough, that for every idle word wrung from my tortured soul by wrong and suffering I could cry—God be merciful to me, a sinner?

And yet, little baby, I was once like thee. Like thee, I stretched out the trusting hand to those who—all. little baby—I am not like thee now; yet stay with me, and perhaps I shall be. Jesus "took a little child—and set him in the midst." Take hold of my hand, and lead me to Heaven.

Going? then God be with thee, as surely as he has been with me, in thy pure presence. I shall see thee again, little baby. If I lead by teachings; thou hast done thy direct mission. FANNY FERN.

LADY DOCTORS.



A. S. H.

And so the female Doctors are prospering and getting patronage. I am sorry for it—sorry about it, for several reasons; one of which is, that it is an honest, and legitimate difference from the everlasting, non-remunerating, consumptive-providing, nervous-wreck-making, drudge, that it is a more excellent way of support, than by the mercenary and un-attractive road, through the churchdoor to the altar, into which so many over-driven women are driven. Having said this I feel at liberty to remark that we still have our little fancies, and one of mine is, that a lot is a pleasanter object to contemplate in a rich room than a hovel; I think, too, that my wrist-r poses more comfortably in a big hood than a little one, and if my mouth is to be inspected I prefer submitting it to a beard than to a flounce. Still—this may be a narrow prejudice, I dare say it is, but I like most of my projudices I am afraid; no amount of fire will burn it out of me.

A female Doctor. Great Heshaphus! Before swallowing her pills, (of which she would be the first!) I should want to make sure, that I had never come between her and a lover, or a new bonnet, or been the innocent recipient of a missive sent from her husband. If I desired her undivided attention to my case I should first remove the bailing glass, and if a consultation were advisable, I should wish to arm myself with a pick-axe, or a sledge-hammer, or some other appropriate weapon before expressing such a wish. If my female Doctor proved to be a pretty lady, I should be very strongly doubt its necessity if my hair happened to be handsome, also the expediency of a scene-shifter to change my coat. I should certainly be so plump and white. Still, these may be little projections in an angel, but they will not help to relieve the breath is taken out of me by any female Doctor of my many knowing senses! I will never exchange my gentlemanly, soft-voiced, soft-stepping, experienced, intelligent, handsome Doctor for a female one, if I have to die without one, for bodkin or live characters—or lose each other's caps.

FANNY FERN.

A WISDOMEN WONDER.

What wonderful things we have wrought
In us, his puny creatures,
To whom the sense of God is not thought,
And claims with love my natures.

By Him, from his a little earth,
Which I must keep so purely,
That I visit there—the Mother—Death,
Born wondrously and nicely. ASCH CASE.

HINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

It seems that one of the greatest pests of Mr. Buchanan's life is the constant annoyance to which he is subjected by the office-seekers. They crowd around him at every public reception, and so watchful are they, that the President cannot so much as shove himself a glass of wine, without being sure to be rounded by them and having their "papers" thrust in his face. For the purpose of relieving our Chief Magistrate from this annoyance we would suggest to him that he issue the following decree:

First, No man will be appointed to office while he is away from home. Secondly, No man will be appointed to office who will do a place for another or for anybody else. Thirdly, No man will be appointed to office for whom any person solicits a favor.

By issuing such a brief document, the President would at once have relieved of the incompatible pests that now annoy him, and get time to read his Lessons in peace.

REAL ESTATE.—Are the best care of imaginary cases; because God helps us in the real cases, and so makes us ashamed of the other.

METALLIC AND HUMAN CURRENCY.

Congress has done the country some service by passing a law for the withdrawing of Spanish coin from circulation. Mexican quarters, shillings and sixpences (nuisance) but thanks to "*An Act to amend by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*," we shall soon get rid of them.

We are thankful for one good example from "the powers that be," and, like good citizens, shall attempt to follow it. Let us have another: Let our citizens, by "virtue of their own authority," reject that counterfeit coin-men and bogus patriots, who have been as common in American cities as Spanish coin—at least, till the establishment of the spectable society. Congress has put an end to the swindling practised by the petty merchants who retailed goods by shillings and sixpences. We propose to remove as great an evil by exploding foreign counts of doubtful reputation, and foreign patriots of no reputation, from the society of our sisters, our daughters, and our wives.

"Know all women by these presents" that the following commodity is not genuine—He calls himself a distinguished foreign nobleman, travelling for pleasure or the benefit of his health; or a persecuted refugee, or a poor patriot in exile. He is whiskered, moustached, perfumed. He wears a title, a dozen decorations, breast-pins, rings, and a Roman nose. He has travelled all over the Continent, and the most celebrated persons of Europe have the honor of being his acquaintances. His occupation in the United States is to be a gentleman, to be noticed, to be caressed, to be silly and bravely of his own hair-breadth escapes and terrible sufferings, and always to feel the sympathies of our would-be aristocracy into hard cash. He considers himself a part of a poor relation. In this character he accepts anything, and has no objections to a rich merchant's daughter or wife, or to a rich merchant's self, if he is wearied of foreign noblemen. In this character he has the distinguished honor of lodging a bullet or a stiletto in your body if you step between the wind and his nobility. Nobleman is written all over him. His *dialogue* appearances, and noble bearing are a label on which is written, "I am that illustrious foreign Count ——, in whose veins runs no drop of plebeian blood." He is always a gentleman, and wears "his honor" as a badge on full coat, not to be looked at without a bow. In degenerate, he is a coward. He is a "forty-lying" seeker; and then he walks with such an air, is this style!

"And the proud tailor went prancing away."

But enough of this. Give us as friend the man whose title of nobility has been written by

God on his heart and brain, whose countenance bears the impress of calm thought, high aims, pure and tender feeling—who speaks the truth, and does not kindly, and at the proper moment—whose hand, whether soft as a queen's or hardened by manual labor, gives a healing sympathetic touch to its touch—and whose eye, whether dim with age or sparkling with youth, never fails to look upward to cast on every one and everything around him the divine light of love. Natural nobility, an unspotted character, and a good conscience—with these are pure, cultured gold to us, and the only currency which should be recognized in the United States.

MURDER.

The papers teem with account of murders in all parts of the country. "Horrible murder!" "Another man's throat cut in Cherry-street!" "A child killed in Washington-street!" "A man stabbed in a fight!" "Another man murdered in Jersey!" "Another in Brooklyn." Such captions as these, and others equally horrible, stare us unceasingly from the columns of daily papers, excite a momentary thrill of horror, and pass into oblivion. The trouble is, there is too little hanging done now-days. Men murder without fear of retributive punishment. The signer of public sentiment has become so relaxed and debauched by brooding philanthropy, that a single murderer is almost as apt to be regarded with sympathy as with abhorrence. Instead of being treated as a criminal he is too often treated as a fashionable lion, and made much of. This will never do. The good old orthodox and most merciful institution of hanging must be put in vigorous operation once more.

CURRENT ITEMS.

THE TRENTON CHRON mentions an attack made upon a dog of the name of Newhallstown, upon the large corpse of the aforesaid species. The owner of the dog in question, a Mr. Hoagland, had left the animal in the house, followed by a three-pound Swiss bull-dog, and then a noise as of a violent struggle. Hastening to the spot he found the dog in the coils of the snake, and evidently getting the worst of it. As soon as he could see, without injuring his four-footed companion, he did so, and finally finding the change of his gun in the serpent's head, he finished him than he was seen departing. He was not taken on board. The dog, though quitely squeezed, was not seriously injured.

In the town of Bentley, Alabama, a man named Baker a short time since became incensed at a worthless fellow, who was hanging around his premises, and, seizing a bread axe, he rushed out, and dealt the intruder a blow which nearly severed his body in two. The people of the town became instantly excited when the fact became known, and Baker was taken into custody.

A GENTLEMAN IN Brooklyn, whose house was overrun with rats, called a crier around, and with them "had a few days' quiet" in cleaning the vermin. A great many were slain, the smell of which became quite overpowering, (although they were speedily removed,) and a big war of the gentlemen, some four years old, became so affected by it that he sickened and died.

A CHILD was made ill by eating berries since, in Jersey City, by eating maple sugar. The physicians considered it a case of poisoning, and gave the child an emetic. There was implacable in hand any very reliable opinions upon. Parents would do well to ask a few questions why they drive their children to eat too much maple sugar purchased at random.

A WITNESS in the Superior Court of Philadelphia says that a contractor has just been contracted for 100,000 bushels of oats, to be delivered on board steamboats at Philadelphia, for Mexico, at sixty-five cents a bushel, making $65,000. Young men who have—will add a hand that better fitted down to the Mexican market.

It seemed as though house-owns must have reached their maximum in this city and vicinity a year ago, but they are higher than ever this season. Recorded old shells of houses now rent for $500, which a few years since would not have commanded more than $200 or $300.

THE Cassville (Ga.) Standard says there is now living in Bartow Co., Ga., a negro woman, named John Haines, who has attained the extraordinary age of one hundred and twenty-four years. She was years old when Washington cut his first tooth.

THE Odessa Government has authorized the construction of a railroad, by a company of British capitalists, from the Mediterranean to the Vistula. It will be continued on to Reisk Indra, a distance of 4,000 miles. A railroad-mania prevails.

A SINGULAR legal case has just been decided in Cincinnati. The defendants, Rhees, were sued as not kept open for more ages, and left it at a business institution. They have compelled to pay $250 or pay a larger cost sums.

MR. Elisha Tries, a gentleman living in Dorchester, Maryland, was putting down a large chimney at his house in lieu of his accustomed stove, the whole mass of brick suddenly came crashing down, and killed him instantly.

THERE are said to be over ten thousand officers and soldiers in Washington. The Government keepers are reaping a rich harvest, and it is almost impossible to get a boarding-house under from ten to fifteen dollars.

IT is stated by Western papers that three "pork operators" cleared $400,000 each last year, and that every others made enormous profits. These fellows must have gone the whole hog" to make such profits.

BY last accounts Constantinople had been laid in either-sixty-seven houses in ashes. The Constantinople referred to is not West, and contained not nine houses and was not destroyed by conflagration.

THERE is great excitement in Paris on account of a prophecy of a Mr. Lenormand, that the end of next June a comet is going to knock this world into the middle of another star.

THE dwelling of Mr. James Taylor, near Houston, Texas, was recently set fire to by a negro. It was absent, and burned down, consuming Mrs. Taylor and three children.

NEW YORK and vicinity consumes annually about four hundred thousand cart loads, which, at twenty-five cents a hundred weight (the usual price), amounts to $2,000,000 per annum.

THE journeymen carpenters of this city are trying to get their wages raised to five dollars, from two dollars paying twelve, fourteen, and fifteen shillings.

A chemist in Paris, after a long series of experiments, has demonstrated that brown or Graham bread is four times more nutritious than white.

AN old lady recently died in Acteyon, in Monterey, aged 130 years.

WIT AND HUMOR.

"TAINT LIKE."—A certain lawyer had his portrait taken, and when it was completed he took a look at his pocket. He frowns and cheats all went to see it, and everybody said it was good. "Oh, but it don't give justice of him!" An old farmer only dissented. "Taint like it!" exclaimed everybody; "just look at it!" "Taint like it!" "Taint—in hair," responded the farmer; "don't you see he has got a wig on? That ain't like him at all!" It was no use argue if he had it to somebody else."

A HORSE BREAKER having been shattered by a ball during an engagement, tobo-went amputation with the following remarks: "Well, doctor, I've had a fall, but I was of course immediately thrown overboard, upon which Jack Tar exclaimed, 'Hurrah, my boy, you've got your leg off!' I do expected joy." "I'll complain of you to the captain. Although I have lost my leg, I have not lost my character, and I had no right to throw my shoe after it."

A HOT IN STARCH.—At a banquet when solving religious was one of the directions. Alexander met to his friend, and said, "What shall do with my son? He is a fool, and not come the year, and will not come next year, and he does not improve at all." "Let him," said the friend, "be a governor of your." The father was shocked, but he complained him to be paid up, and also honoured his exercise.

"My son, what did you like your brother for? Now I tell you what it is, you shall not have one sweetmeat for making fools' laugh you!" If you wouldn't like to have your bro. ther take you, you shall not have it." "Ah, mother—get out with your whipping! Remember the 'Golden Rule' mamma told us, and you wouldn't like not to have sugar, for you to whip me!"

DISORDERS OF THE NERVES.—Persons, especially fair ladies, who, in consequence of inactive or sedentary habits, the bodily powers are not sufficiently exercised to afford and luxurious regimen, are afflicted with the distressing disorder termed Nervousness. Of all the remedies ever efficiently cured by six weeks' services at home as kitchen, Dr. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters.

TAKING IT BY TURNS.—A clerk was assisting a gentleman to fold up a number of circulars to send out to him. "Please, sir, I've died?" "Indeed! my good man." "Yes, sir, and I've died to be buried, and I've died to have one during the service?" "Why, sir," says the clerk, "I take it you've died to be a fool, and you've died to be a knave."

WHAT dogs are these, Sandy?" inquired a gentleman of a Scotch lad, who was out with a large brace of sweeps of wapple-looking terriers along a street in Jersey City, near the depot. "Those are the dogs that murdered," they can" of the railway, and they are the detective, and they are the detective."

STRANGE, Moore, and Wright, three notorious murderers, were hung in Philadelphia recently, when Moore observed, "There is but one lesson among us, and that's Wright." "Oh, no," said Wright, "there is two Moore." "Aye," said Strange, "that's Wright."

THE AMATEUR.—"Now, Mr. Jones," "No one would take you to be what you are," said an old-fashioned gentleman to a young lady and her young lover lately.

WHY?" was innocently asked. "Because they can't take you for a fool."

THE school-officers of a small town in Dutchess County, in this State, having advertised for a school-master, received an "application" from a candidate of good character, who said he "would fill up his time at teaching." Engaged.

REMOVE FOR A LAWYER.—A Kanakh attorney, asking a very worthy gentleman what was Gaul's? "What is that to you?" said he; "trouble with these things that concern you."

THE adage of "Charity begins at home" is often realized but a handsome mark worn by deformed fellahness.

THE WEATHER.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

What's convenient thing the weather is,
For variety of discourse. How it frets out
All social converse, when the dull ear-drum
Of the fair talker, upon the dusty road,
Grows calm and resistant, were it not for this!
——But most of all, it is the life and breath
Of commonplace talk. "The very cold,"
And every one assents. "How warm it is!"
Then shrinking every leaner wipes his brow,
Fearing he shall perspire. "Is something that"
To find a subject whose all agree,
And laughter over-spreads the countenance.
"Is seven o'clock?"
Then from the country comes
To the fireside party. He would fain
Call on a dozen of them to-night, where he knew
He should meet a familiar face in the throng,
The lady says, that was the clever boy
With a good judgment, whose opinions are heard;
But what opinions is he to say to her,
Who to these halls of fashion, pass and gaid,
Dwells like a queen? A longer thought animates
His mind.
He says, his preaching called
To this place, and he is a stranger therefore.
"They say there's a severe thing with weather known
Since second Friday, fifty years ago.
When everything froze up. You can, perhaps,
Remember it."
"I've not that honor, sir——
My memory don't extend to what took place
Ere I was born."
There was a thought for much
About the weather, friend——But, look for some,
Now dressed, and blundering, to the charge again.
"Is it not cold?" Then from the corner-seats fair,
Even to the country: "Indeed! I should not have been,
Among those tall, brick houses, to-night, but for
Other like or light cause. Say to me this
Warm weather, Ma'am."
"We spend the summer months
At some cool watering place."
A cold pause!
What's to be done?
So you ride out much, Sir-an,
In pleasant weather?"
"Somedays" an idiot's
With piles of snow, my husband will not let.
The coachman drive them——and 'tis very dull
In this dark room."
I guess I see a storm,
Not far ahead. For such a day as this
Will prove a weather-breeder. I must be
A getting before another sets in,
Of blinding snow, to clog the railroads up.
Excuse me there's a call. Good morning, Sir.
And forth he rushes to the clear, cold air,
Where he can breathe, and think, and find out
If this fabulous, or FIFA several.
But as for us, who do not need such help,
Dedicated to the mistress of human possessions
More than is fitting——and we might as well
Make ourselves easy, and with fresh our thoughts
On some sharp simplicity pass. The rain, the hail,
The snow, cold vapor and the roaring wind,
Absorb their nuisances, who might, perhaps,
From their own atmosphere, shut out the
Some speech of knowledge, or no Maker's still.
Let's "make another color, who shall not talk"
About the weather, but by certain rules
And regulations, which we herewith make:
——First, having said, concisely as we can,
What weather is to-day, we will not touch
Its history through the past, or promise
Its fate of future.
——Then this word
Shall be disposed of on the following terms:
Item, a word on some useful topic;
Or, way of doing good; a word or two
To good deeds, and kind in spirit and in path,
To cheer the aged pilgrim on his course,
To bathe the bleeding heart with sympathy;
A word or two of practice how
For our whole history and destiny, and of praise
To Him who sets our father's God, and ours.
Item, a memory of the weather's genius
Have all our pathway as a shortness sky.
Hartford, Conn., 1857.

THE ABDUCTED HEIRESS.

BY MRS. CAROLINE INGHAM.

AUTHOR OF "SARAH STANLEY," "THE MAID OF THE MANOR OF GOLD," ETC. ETC.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1857, by HORACE GREELEY & CO., in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BLOODY EYE.

The long hours of the next day, dragged on slowly and wearily to Justina. A pause before our fate is allowed to those who are in it, but case it was doubly so. She felt, instinctively, that the coming interview, would, in a great measure, determine her future life, and longed to have it over, and to know the worst.

The party were assembled after dinner, in the handsome drawing-room, which had scarcely been opened before for twenty years. Mr. Courcy reclined in an easy chair, near the fireside, with the last news sheet in her hand—Alfred, looking over his shoulder, and Justina, sitting at a little distance, with a sling, her only plaything, from his mother, beside one of the bay-windows, and Justina was walking back and forth in the shadow of the room, her hands folded before her, looking at them all.

"I declare this looks like genuine home comfort—does it not, mother?" said Alfred, looking up from his paper, with pleasant expression.

"The genuine comfort of an English home," replied his mother. "Shall we ring for lights, my dear friend?"

"Oh no," said Mrs. De Courcy, quickly. "It is too bad to spoil the charm of twilight hour, and I do not care to read. It is getting too dark for you to see there, gather around the fire, and let us talk together."

With all my heart," said Alfred, and sweeping the chess-table on one side, he drew another from his easy chair close to the fire, and establish himself comfortably there.

"You make me so easy, my dear mother," he said, playfully, "that I don't know but I will. I shall hate to go back to the cold existence and never get spoiled again."

"Ah, my son, I am afraid I have always spoiled you," she said, looking at him fondly.

"I am afraid you have," he said. But on such a nature as hers, even a mother's indulgence can have no effect. He was still as thoughtful, as noble and gentle as she had always known him. There was much sophistry, in the eyes of those who knew her, for the blind partiality with which she regarded him.

He looked around uneasily, as she sat down beside him, at the figure pacing to and fro, in the mid gloom, at the further end of the room.

"Will you not join us, Justina?" he asked. "Our circle is not complete without you."

She did not answer. She deeply sheathed in her own bitter thoughts, she had almost forgotten that she was not alone. But when he called it for the second time, she started and turned toward him.

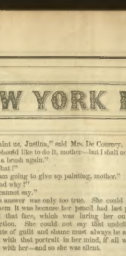
"I beg your pardon, Alfred," she said, hurriedly. "Did you speak to me?"

"Certainly. You did not hear me the first time, I believe?"

"My thoughts were far away. I have not heard you speak before, and even now I am afraid I can not tell what you said."

"I only asked you to come and join our circle," he said, a little coldly. It was his misfortune to love her too tenderly, and the thought that she had been quite unconscious of his presence, while thinking, perhaps, of another, pained and wounded him. Alas! he knew too well who that other must be, and in his heart he cursed the fatal hour that had ever brought them two together.

"I think you must excuse me," said Justina, silently. "It is pleasant to walk here in the dusk, and I feel the need of motion. Besides, I like to look at you, all sitting there in the glow of the fire. It is quite a picture—do not move, or you will break the charm."



THE MEETING AT THE OLD GATE.

It could have hardly predicated more consternation than this simple name, so carelessly uttered. Alfred had started up in his chair,—he pale cheeks all a glow with passionate excitement, while his mother had her hand upon his arm, and looked reproachfully at her friend. Justina, after that first involuntary exclamation, stood pale as death, with her head bowed down, like a criminal before her judges, and Mrs. De Courcy, fleeting scarlet at the awkward mistake she had made, made haste to change the subject.

"Well—if you must give up painting, be it so. But your pictures—where are they?"

"All safe, mother. They were saved on the night of the fire," she added with a timid look at Alfred, who was lying back upon his pillows again, "and I packed and sent them down here with my own hands."

"Very well. It would be a pity to have them lost. Some of them were really beautiful."

"Especially the portrait," said Alfred, with a sarcastic smile.

"What do you mean?" said Justina, startled out of all her forced composure by his words.

"You and I know."

"Alfred, will you explain yourself," she asked, drawing herself up to her full height, while Mrs. De Courcy said her friend looked as in mischief.

"Now don't quarrel, my dear children—don't," said Mrs. Erastein, pleadingly. "You don't know what you are doing. An unkind word spoken now, may rankle in the heart forever. Let the subject, whatever it may be, drop till another time. You do not wish to spoil the harmony of our first evening at home, I am sure.

"Justina and I are not going to quarrel, mother," said Alfred, with the same sarcastic smile. "We know each other too well. I only spoke of something which I would like to have explained at some future day, if she is willing, when I feel better able to talk with her than I do to-night."

"You shall have any explanation it is in my power to give, whenever you please, and are disposed to ask it," said Justina, haughtily.

"There—there, mother—you see I've put us out to this, or you will certainly quarrel," said Mrs. Erastein, endeavoring to laugh it off. "I suppose you have not given up your music yet, even if you have your painting?"

"No, Mrs. Erastein."

"Then go into the music-room—there is a dear, good girl—learn the four open, and play us something. Music is the best thing in the world for soothing the feelings."

Justina smiled slightly, but did as she was requested. She sat down at the piano-forte, and thumbed off some brilliant waltzes, that she knew brilliantly for the suppressed anger she felt. But the wondrous magic of her fingers—sudden music was not long in making itself felt. In spite of herself, she felt softened and tranquilized by the band passed over the keys; and striking a few deep, rich chords, she felt the instrument and sweeted herself into the piece.

This had been her favorite instrument from a child. She had inherited this peculiarity from her father, who had been passionately fond of it in rich and solemn tones, and sometimes was almost perfect. Her small hands seemed to linger upon the ivory keys with a loving pressure, and draw the deepest, most magnificent sounds from them almost without an effort. And now, after a soft and mournful prelude, she struck, at once, into that splendid hymn, "Dies Ire—Dies Illæ," and added to it the charm of her own sweet and powerful contralto voice.

Her listeners were breathless. With those majestic words sounding in their ears, they were in small appeared the sorrows and vexations of their every-day life. And to the singer,—oh! to her—what a blessed calm they brought. Her whole soul seemed borne upward on the tide of song to the throne of the Highest, and her young heart swelled with a feeling of intense adoration, that was of itself a prayer.

It was the best, the wisest preparation she could have made for the approaching interview. She felt it so. And as she rose from her seat, and joined the group by the fireside again, her face was full of a calm determination to abide by the right, and defy the fascinations of one who had almost tempted her to sin.

All were silent for a moment; and then Justina said, quietly:

"I think I shall walk upon the terrace for a few moments, before I go to my room. The night is fine, and I will wrap up warmly. Good night, my dear mother—good night, Mrs. Erastein."

She shook hands with her hostess, and kissed her mother twice. A remorseful tenderness made her feel that she could not leave Alfred's chair. He looked up at her, and she saw that his fine eyes were full of tears.

"Your music went to my heart, little one," he said, kindly. "With that sounding in my ears, I cannot chrrik any paltry resentments. Come nearer—we are friends, are we not, Justina?"

"Always—always, Alfred!"

"Yes, always—come what may. You have cherished the evil spirit with your song, my darling."

She pressed her hand, and smiled up at her, as she leaned over him. A sudden, long-unstir her heart at the thought of Saville, waiting for her even then. She could not meet those clear eyes, but bending still lower, she kissed him fondly and softly, and sought to restrain her emotion, hurried from the room.

Down through the long avenue she glided like a spirit. The moon had not yet risen, but a clear sky in the sky betokened her speedy coming. Justina paused as she reached the hedge gate, and looked around her. Nothing stirred, save some bird nestled in its lonely nest. A strangelyfeelingful sad joy, had sorrow—filled her heart.

"I am not coming," she said, aloud. "I need never see him again, since he breaks the appointment he made himself."

"And you are glad of the excuse to leave him forever—is it not so?" said a deep voice beside her.

She started and turned around. There, beside her, in the deep shadow, stood Saville—he had leaned against the gate.

"You are here, then?" she said, with a sigh.

"Yes, Justina, I have been waiting for you some time. You are late. What kept you?"

"I was obliged to say my prayers."

"And to Alfred," added Saville, mockingly.

"Yes," she answered, unconsciously, and not then. She drew herself up haughtily, and looked at him.

"And if I was, what then?"

"Nothing."

He looked at her fixedly, as he pronounced the word in a low, sad tone, and for the first time the girl felt the heart-wrench her. She looked away from her with folded arms; he had not attempted to approach her when they first met; and his whole demeanor was cold, and, sad, distant. She could not understand the change. She looked stealthily in his dark and melancholy face a moment, and then turned to watch the young moon, just trembling above the tops of the trees. But her whole heart was filled with a strange sense of impatience, she exclaimed,—

"Are you ill, or unhappy?"

"Both, Justina," he said, gravely. "I have been thinking, and for me to think is to grieve. Justina, you cause me to grieve now, for loving."

"Are you for the last time, to receive your last embrace, and bid you adieu forever."

"Justina!"

"Not at all, my dear child."

"What then?"

"Will you have to elope with me?"

"I!"

"You. Do not start back, or look so terrified. I repeat it—you came here to elope with me."

"General Saville," said Justina, with dignity, "I certainly did not come here to be made a jest of. I beg to say that you are even having your own pass."

"Not you." He held her hand firmly in his, and added,—

"I am not jesting with you. In the name you order, and near the public road, stands a post-chaise with the travelled horses attached that could be procured for money. Do you know for whom it is waiting?"

Her lips were white as she answered, "No."

"For you and me, Justina."

"Saville, you surely do not mean——"

"Not now—not now, Justina. Think better of me now. I have been thinking—I have been going over our acquaintance from beginning to end. I have been very wrong, Justina."

She did not answer.

"You are a young and innocent girl. My life has been what I should blush to name before you. I am no worse and no better than other men, but I am worse than you. And so I leave you. I will be won by another whom you love, and who is worthy of you."

"You are going, then?"

"I am going. If I have fallen into the error most men are liable to make, of supposing myself so I am, worthy of a pure and innocent girl like you, my eyes are open now, and the last thing I can do is to rectify that mistake. And so, Justina, adieu!"

He looked at him in a bewildered way, as he raised her hand to his lips.

"You leave me, and in this way," she murmured. "After all your words of love, you care so little for me, that you can leave me like this. Oh, Saville, Saville! you have taught me a fearful lesson!"

She buried her face in her hands. He bent over her and tried to soothe her.

"Do not weep; do not weep, my child."

"Do not fear me; I never weep," she said, raising her proud head suddenly. "But oh! how what an alloy I have escaped! How can I ever be thankful enough!"

"What do you mean?"

"Suppose a case. If I had been weak enough to fly with you—you loving me as little as I now find you do—after awhile, what would have been my fate?"

He started and colored painfully.

"Justina—you cannot think me so base as to wrong you, my poor pet lamb! You cannot think I would fly with you, unless I intended to be thankful enough?"

"Of course, I know your honor and my own too well, to dream of such a thing," she said, with a sigh. "But men are sometimes of their wives. If you had married me, and then grown weary of me, what should I have done? I could not have lived!"

He looked at her with a melancholy smile.

"Did you then care so much, my little one, for your poor old friend?"

And bending down, he drew her to his breast, and kissed her. The gentle caress seemed to melt the cold reserve which each had wrapped around them like a garment.

"I love you so much," she murmured, "that your coldness has cut me to the heart. How could you forget me so?" I shall never see you again."

Pride and prudence left him, as she leaned her head against his breast, and looked up in his face.

"Justina," he whispered, "I never in my life loved you half so much as now."

She started and looked up at him with a half frightened air.

"But what has made you seem so strange and cold?"

"I may have seemed so, but at heart I am the same as ever. But for the last twenty-four hours I have been deeply of the step I proposed taking. With you for my wife, Justina, I know well what happiness would be in store for me. But I am an old man already, my darling, while you are in your first youth. As time wears on, you may regret the hour when you united to me; and you may even sigh in secret for another, and look forward eagerly to the hour of my death. And that—oh, there could be no worse torture on earth for me."

He paused. She was listening with her head bent down, and well nothing.

"Again I repeat what I have already said, that I am not worthy of you. I may regret my early folly—I may have no right to ask you to wed yourself to them. Your husband should be free from all entanglements, Justina. He should be ready to look you calmly in the face, and say that he had never done wrong to the sacred image of you within his breast. You should be able to say to him you that he had kept the whiteness of his soul," in spite of all temptation; and I—God help me—I lost it long ago."

She raised her head now, and looked with a bright smile in his face.

"And is that all?"

"All, Justina!—is it not enough?"

"Love can forgive much."

The tragedy came over him strongly, as he looked down upon her, to forget everything and urge her to fly with him. But, in his revelry he had said, he mentioned himself, even when she seemed most easy to be won. He lifted her head from his breast.

"There is another reason, my darling, which we

But Mrs. De Courcy had been too proud of her daughter's talent to let it fall to the ground so easily.

"You talk strangely, my child," she said. "Why, to give up painting now when you are improving so astonishingly, is simply ridiculous. That last picture you painted—what was the name?"

"Spring," said Justina, feeling a bitter pang at the thought of him who named it, and of all that had been said in that eventful interview.

"Spring. Yes, I remember now, you told me that General Saville had advised you——"

"Mother!"

Had a bomb-shell burst in the midst of the room,

THE MEETING AT THE OLD GATE.

it could not have startled more consternation than this simple name, so carelessly uttered. Alfred had started up in his chair,—he pale cheeks all a glow with passionate excitement, while his mother had her hand upon his arm, and looked reproachfully at her friend. Justina, after that first involuntary exclamation, stood pale as death, with her head bowed down, like a criminal before her judges, and Mrs. De Courcy, fleeting scarlet at the awkward mistake she had made, made haste to change the subject.

"Well—if you must give up painting, be it so. But your pictures—where are they?"

"All safe, mother. They were saved on the night of the fire," she added with a timid look at Alfred, who was lying back upon his pillows again, "and I packed and sent them down here with my own hands."

"Very well. It would be a pity to have them lost. Some of them were really beautiful."

"Especially the portrait," said Alfred, with a sarcastic smile.

"What do you mean?" said Justina, startled out of all her forced composure by his words.

"You and I know."

"Alfred, will you explain yourself," she asked, drawing herself up to her full height, while Mrs. De Courcy said her friend looked as in mischief.

"Now don't quarrel, my dear children—don't," said Mrs. Erastein, pleadingly. "You don't know what you are doing. An unkind word spoken now, may rankle in the heart forever. Let the subject, whatever it may be, drop till another time. You do not wish to spoil the harmony of our first evening at home, I am sure.

"Justina and I are not going to quarrel, mother," said Alfred, with the same sarcastic smile. "We know each other too well. I only spoke of something which I would like to have explained at some future day, if she is willing, when I feel better able to talk with her than I do to-night."

"You shall have any explanation it is in my power to give, whenever you please, and are disposed to ask it," said Justina, haughtily.

"There—there, mother—you see I've put us out to this, or you will certainly quarrel," said Mrs. Erastein, endeavoring to laugh it off. "I suppose you have not given up your music yet, even if you have your painting?"

"No, Mrs. Erastein."

"Then go into the music-room—there is a dear, good girl—learn the four open, and play us something. Music is the best thing in the world for soothing the feelings."

Justina smiled slightly, but did as she was requested. She sat down at the piano-forte, and thumbed off some brilliant waltzes, that she knew brilliantly for the suppressed anger she felt. But the wondrous magic of her fingers—sudden music was not long in making itself felt. In spite of herself, she felt softened and tranquilized by the band passed over the keys; and striking a few deep, rich chords, she felt the instrument and sweeted herself into the piece.

This had been her favorite instrument from a child. She had inherited this peculiarity from her father, who had been passionately fond of it in rich and solemn tones, and sometimes was almost perfect. Her small hands seemed to linger upon the ivory keys with a loving pressure, and draw the deepest, most magnificent sounds from them almost without an effort. And now, after a soft and mournful prelude, she struck, at once, into that splendid hymn, "Dies Ire—Dies Illæ," and added to it the charm of her own sweet and powerful contralto voice.

Her listeners were breathless. With those majestic words sounding in their ears, they were in small appeared the sorrows and vexations of their every-day life. And to the singer,—oh! to her—what a blessed calm they brought. Her whole soul seemed borne upward on the tide of song to the throne of the Highest, and her young heart swelled with a feeling of intense adoration, that was of itself a prayer.

It was the best, the wisest preparation she could have made for the approaching interview. She felt it so. And as she rose from her seat, and joined the group by the fireside again, her face was full of a calm determination to abide by the right, and defy the fascinations of one who had almost tempted her to sin.

All were silent for a moment; and then Justina said, quietly:

"I think I shall walk upon the terrace for a few moments, before I go to my room. The night is

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DISCOVERY.

Mrs. Erastein and her son were the first to present themselves at the breakfast table on the following morning.

In a well-ordered house, there is a certain pretty almost the aspect of the breakfast-table. The hand and eyes of the one we love, has carefully directed all—affection displays itself in the neatly folded napkin, and in the bright spoon and fork. It is an attention, worth scores of empty protestations, and as we sit down to the meal we are ready for us, and look around with a sigh of satisfaction, that we—the one lucky enter this day of romance has gone by, and that we can appreciate and understand such manifestations of affection as these.

Something in the aspect of the bright and well ordered room, fooled mother and son at once. Mrs. Erastein rubbed her hands with an air of cheerful self-satisfaction, and exclaimed,—

"Well, really Alfred, I must say, this looks much more pleasant than the smoky house in London. I took back from there with pleasure. I am ever see such a view. And the air—but it does not look as if we had breakfasted, does it breakfast table."

Answered by no hands, as you may guess, but those of "Fairy Fay," spoiled Alfred, with a smile. There lies the charm for me, mother. That coffee is made as it should be—those eggs are done to a turn, and those rolls, as you see, are white as snow, are bright and well risen. But the thought that Justina's taste dictated the arrangement of the table, is far more to me than what is on it."

Mrs. Erastein only smiled, but did not answer, but looked around the room for Justina and the ladies before her, to speak.

Alfred sighed, and went toward a large parcel wrapt in cloth, that was leaning against the wall at the further end of the room.

"What have we here, mother?"

"I am sure I do not know. Some package, probably, which the servants forgotten."

But certainly, the breakfast room is not the place for it. Ring the bell, Alfred."

"I know—but in the hurry of our arrival, it must have been overlooked. I will have it sent to where it to come and take it away, if you cannot find out your breakfast while it is there."

"I will not ring the bell."

He tried to unfasten the knot that confined the parcel, and succeeded, pulling away a piece from the table and cut it.

"What is the meddling of the mystery," he said, gaily. "It is hard and square—it will probably turn out to be a firebrand, or one of those old Egyptian mummies that are all the rage back in London. I hope they have not come here to stay, for I cannot abide the sight of a mummy in the last wrapper—pretty—cheap—now mother, look!"

He shook off both the cloth and paper, and Alfred turned away with an oath—the first his mother had ever heard from his lips.

"My boy!"

"I beg your pardon me. It was wrong—but the shock was too sudden. It was so gay and happy, but a moment before—and now—that accursed face smiling upon you, will drive me mad! But he shall not triumph here. I'll tear him from the canvas, and trample him beneath my feet."

His mother seized his arm so in raising towards the picture.

"Alfred, what are you going to do? Remember how many hours of toil Justina has spent over that picture, and how dearly she prizes it."

The unhappy young man looked at her a moment in silence.

"You are right, mother. I cannot mar her work, or injure what she loves."

He staggered to his chair, and laying his head upon his folded arms, wept like a child. It may have been weak and foolish—but he loved her with his whole soul, and his heart seemed almost broken by the sudden blow.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

A servant entered and said something in a low voice, to Mrs. Brandon.

"What topic?" she replied blushing like a girl, but very much pleased.

"What can be want at this hour?"

"It says he comes on important business, and begs you will make no delay."

"Who is it, mother," asked Alfred, looking up.

"Colonel Gale, the friend of General Sarsfield."

"What brings him here?"

"I do not know," she answered, after a slight hesitation. "But show him into the drawing-room, and I will be with him in a few moments."

Pardon me if I intrude, but really my business will admit of no delay. Every moment is of the greatest importance," said another voice at the door.

They turned and saw Colonel Sair standing there, pale and anxious looking, and with his dress stained and disordered by travel.

"May I come in, my dear friend?"

"Certainly, Colonel. Come in and take breakfast with us," said Mrs. Brandon, recovering from her surprise, and advancing to meet him.

He shook hands with Alfred, took the seat she offered him, and looked around with a thoughtful, and pre-occupied air.

"You will find the coffee refreshing after your journey—and those rolls—allow me to recommend them," said Mrs. Brandon, politely.

"Thank you, Madam."

He took the cup, and dropped in lump after lump of sugar, in a way that showed plainly how little he knew what he was doing. Mrs. Brandon watched his proceedings with an embarrassed air. What could all the gay and gallant colonel?

His eyes, wandering round the room, fell at last upon the picture of Estelle. He leaped from his chair and exclaimed—

"Good God, Madam! What is that doing here?"

"It is the portrait of your friend," said Mrs. Brandon gravely, fully assured that the colonel was either insane, or intoxicated.

"But how came it here?"

"The artist brought it here."

"And may I ask who the artist can be?"

"Certainly, sir. It was Miss Estelle De Courcy."

The colonel sank into his chair again. There was a long pause, during which Mrs. Brandon and Alfred exchanged glances, while his eyes were fixed thoughtfully on the portrait.

"When did he sit for this?" he asked at last.

"Seven, sir."

The colonel looked puzzled, and pulled at his heavy moustache.

"Has De Courcy painted it from memory?" said Alfred, to whom every word was a puzzle.

"No."

There was much that was significant in that simple monosyllable, and Alfred and his mother exchanged a look. The colonel looked another way.

"And Miss Justine—is she with you?" he asked hesitatingly.

"She is, sir."

He looked as if he answer had been unexpected.

"You are sure she is in the house?"

"I am sure, sir," said Mrs. Brandon, with dignity. "May I ask why Colonel Sair is so earnest in his enquiries for her?"

They all rose from their seats—the colonel pale and agitated.

"My dear Madam, I know I must appear impertinent—and so I'm afraid you think my every question. His General Sarsfield born love since you came from Ireland?"

"Never, sir."

It was now Alfred's turn to grow pale.

"You are sure he has not seen her?"

"I am."

"And that she is now in her room?"

Mrs. Brandon bowed.

"Then my dear friends, I rejoice with you from the bottom of my heart. I might have known it was all a foolish blunder of my own."

"What do you mean?" cried mother and son, in a breath.

"My dear Madam, I found that Estelle had left town, and near one said he had gone down into Devonshire. I knew how much he admired Miss Justine, and that she was engaged to Alfred here. I came after him, travelling night and day, dreading I know not what. The moment I got to Cork town, we passed a post-chaise flying along the road like mad. I asked the driver who was in it, and he call out—Estelle!" A gentleman threw his head from the window, and an suddenly drew it back. They were out of sight in a moment, but although it was scarcely day, I could have sworn in the excited glance I had got of his face that it was Estelle. Before I started in pursuit I thought I would breakfast on him, and see if he had not really flown, for I should not like to make myself ridiculous you know, by racing over the country after a man who is a perfect stranger to me. But since you say Estelle has not been here, and the lady is not in her chamber, why, I'm all right, and I'm the happiest dog alive to think my friend is still safe and sound in Ireland. Mrs. Brandon—you must excuse me, but I'm too happy to keep still. Tol-de-rol-de, ral," and the colonel executed an impromptu pas de pigeon wing with considerable agility.

He checked it, however, on seeing the face of his companions assume an alarmed expression.

"What is the matter with you?" asked Mrs. Brandon, anxiously.

"Yes, Madam—before light."

"Mother," said Alfred, "have you seen Justine this morning?"

"No."

"Or since she left us last night?"

"No—and don't look like that, my boy; or of course she is in her room. I will send a servant up to ask her to come down, and then we shall all have a hearty laugh at our folly."

She rang the bell and a servant entered.

"Go to Miss De Courcy's room, and ask her if she will come down. Tell her a gentleman from London wishes to see her immediately."

"That will bring her down at once," she added, looking round to be left the room. "Curiosity is the easiest thing to be aroused in a woman's heart."

All were silent. The moments were away like ages. At length the step was heard upon the stairs and the colonel rose.

"Well," said Mrs. Brandon.

"Miss Justine is not in her room, Madam."

A cry of rage and grief broke from the lips of Alfred. His mother was calm.

"She is far from."

"Yes, Madam."

"There must be some strange mistake here."

"If you please, Madam," said the servant bowing respectfully, "Miss Justine's bed has not been slept in; and her maid just told me, as I came down, that her mistress was not in her room all night. She did not speak of it before, for fear of alarming you, Madam."

"That will do. You can go," said Mrs. Brandon, quietly, and the servant left the room.

She laid her hand upon Alfred's shoulder. "My son, it is useless for us to try to deceive ourselves. She has gone—"

"And with that villain!" said Alfred, springing to his feet. "But I will follow him to the end of the earth. Mother—God bless you—I shall go mad!"

"Hush, Alfred! Sit down here beside me. Are you in a fit state to follow any one? Colonel Sair, what can be done. Is it best to pursue them?"

"I would say so, by all means," he replied, "A thousand accidents may occur to delay them."

"And where do you think they have gone?"

"To Grosse Grove, I should presume."

"Then, mother," said Alfred, kneeling in his chair's my bride is taken from me, and I am expected to sit down and smile. I will be trusted like a boy no longer. I will go."

"But, Alfred—"

"Do not stop me, mother. I have always been a dutiful child to you, but here you can have no authority. Colonel Sair will you accompany me. Ring the bell, if you please, and order the post horses at once. Tell Andrew to mount my horse, and ride on before to order relays. Perhaps we may yet reach them."

"Alfred, I command you to stay," said Mrs. Brandon.

The young man turned very pale.

"Mother, for the first time in my life, I must disobey you."

She sank back in her chair, pale as death.

"Ruth boy," she cried, "do you think you are the only one deeply wounded in this affair? Estelle—and think, too, of her poor mother. I believe I will break her heart when she hears this. Is there any other thing?"

"Alfred, I implore you to stay," said Mrs. Brandon, gently.

The young man turned very pale.

"Mother, for the first time in my life, I must disobey you."

She sank back in her chair, pale as death.

"Ruth boy," she cried, "do you think you are the only one deeply wounded in this affair? Estelle—and think, too, of her poor mother. I believe I will break her heart when she hears this. Is there any other thing?"

"Hush—here she comes!" said Alfred, drawing back as the door opened.

The two friends and the company air seemed to have worked wonders for Mrs. De Courcy. She had risen walking to and fro upon the floor, and as a flush pale but suffering her pale cheek, gave back to her her own air of dignity and calm. She knew she had been found.

"I fear I am late," she said, as she entered the room. "But the beauty of the morning must prove my excuse. The air was so delicious, my dear Margaret, that I could not resist the wish to breathe it."

"I am glad you have found it so, replied Mrs. Brandon, who felt constrained to say something.

"But, Frederic, here is a friend of whom you have said so many good things—Colonel Sair. Colonel Sair, Mrs. De Courcy."

The latter, with the faintest possible look of wonder in her large blue eyes, at the appearance of a guest at such an unseasonable hour, and such a disordered dress. And then a solemn silence fell over the whole group.

It is a strange weighing of awe and pity that we look upon a person who stands, unconscious of fate, upon the brink of a precipice, and is sad to see the beautiful smile upon the lip and in the eye, and know that by one false step or one act, it may be turned into tears. Like those who would hide the corpse of a murdered man from the eyes of his injured friends, we shun the sight of the sad, and strive to screen it from those it most concerns. But the life-blood of the victim was not heavily cut, and betrays still—and the secret cannot long be kept.

And then, in that pleasant breakfast-room, those three were trying to hide their sorrow from the unconscious woman whose every word was like a dagger thrust to their bleeding hearts.

"I have received a letter this morning in her room this morning as I left my own," she remarked. "I came down to the table expecting to find one of pleasant surprise, and now she is not here. My dear Margaret, you must scold her. It will not do to have her habituated to the comforts of home."

No one answered, and for the first time the ordeal commenced. Each one dreaded to utter a word. She looked at them anxiously.

"Good people—you seem grave and silent. In the name of God"—she added, with sudden terror—"what is the matter?"

"Can you have no idea?" asked Mrs. Brandon putting her arm around her waist.

"I can."

"Colonel Sair came down early this morning to tell us some terrible news, which has since been confirmed."

"Go on, Margaret, don't stop."

"Estelle has left home."

"What—has the bank failed, and all Ingear? Well, I can bear it."

"Oh, worse than that—far worse than that!"

"It is not about Justine," said Mrs. De Courcy, growing white to the very lips.

"Alas—it is!"

"I will not quickly."

"She has left us, Evelyn."

"Left us, Evelyn De Courcy, with a bewildered look. "It was only last night that I saw her alive and well."

"She is not dead, Evelyn."

"What then! why do you torment me in this way?" said Mrs. De Courcy, impatiently.

"I almost wish she was."

"If there is one in this room that loves me, let him or her speak, not sit as cruel," cried Mrs. De Courcy in a frenzy, unnatural voice.

Evelyn—she is gone!"

The unhappy mother uttered a faint cry, and fell back in her chair. But when they poured water her, she sustained them away.

"When did she go?"

"Last night, Evelyn."

"And while my kiss was yet warm upon her lips. Well, how will my poor husband act, this man, who has loved her from her and hours friends as his own child?"

"Estelle," said the indignant voice of Alfred, "has gone—your bosom friend."

"Yes—and yonder he smiles mockingly, at my anguish."

He pointed to the portrait. It was then the first time she had ever seen it. She started violently, gave a long, earnest look at it, and turning to him said with a trembling voice—

"Alfred—have some pity. Tell me that this is not the face of Estelle—that this is not the man she has taken my daughter away."

"Dear Madam, I cannot. It is Estelle."

"For God's sake, then, go home, and rob after them for life or death. Oh, this could not be! Heaven could not permit so fearful a crime."

"Perhaps we were hasty in our fears," said Mrs. Brandon, shocked at the sudden change in her face.

"Hide—ride, for life and death," she murmured, fiercely. "As for you, I think my heart is broken. I believe that I can die now."

"And will you try to follow my advice?"

"If I isn't something impossible. You are so well and energetic, always, that you cannot make allowance for my poor heart, and the annoyance of all those noisy children."

"Well, then, instead of giving you advice, Mrs. Wood, I will tell you something of my own history. There is a wider contrast, in every respect, between my 'now' and my 'then' than yours. Shall I tell you?"

"NOW AND THEN."

BY MARY O. VAUGHAN.

"I never knew anything about sorrow, or trouble, or care, when I lived in my father's house. I think I was as happy as the day was long—so responsibility, no fault-finding, nobody sick, or cross; nothing to do but enjoy myself, while all my wants were supplied without a thought on my part. Was it not so, my dear?" and Mrs. Wood, the speaker,—one of those little, pallid, nervous women, who make use of subtitle to make up a washed-out calico or ribband, not only—but—but—but—and here, and part of a dull, neutral tint, as if the colors had all "run" into one general dinginess,—sighed deeply, and wiped away one of the tears of fear that she kept always lurking under her eye-lids for instant use.

Mr. Wilson, to whom she relieved this complaint, was a veteran of perhaps thirty-five years of age, only an hour years older than Mrs. Wood, probably, but with her bright eyes, glowing cheeks, and the energy that was visible in every movement of her form and features seemed much younger. She smiled a little as she answered,

"Almost as happy as when you married Wood?"

"Almost eighteen," was the reply, with a dismal sigh.

"Too young," said Mrs. Wilson, parenthetically, adding, in a louder tone, "I suppose you had your choice in the matter—nobody thought of putting you off on anybody else, and you were in his power than in other things?"

"Why—what made you think so?"

"I did not think so. But you came to me for advice and consolation, and I am trying to do so—am waiting to aid you upon the best plan. I only understand—as I said—that you married Mr. Wood, and were very happy. Is that the whole standing of a matured attachment?"

"Of course you are. Everybody knows that there was a love affair connected with, and that I've borne more than any woman ever did before, and—"

"Let that period rest," said Mrs. Wilson, "and care for me, do they?"

"I am glad you have found it so, replied Mrs. Brandon, who felt constrained to say something. "But, Frederic, here is a friend of whom you have heard me speak often—Colonel Sair. Colonel Sair, Mrs. De Courcy."

The latter, with the faintest possible look of wonder in her large blue eyes, at the appearance of a guest at such an unseasonable hour, and such a disordered dress. And then a solemn silence fell over the whole group.

It is a strange weighing of awe and pity that we look upon a person who stands, unconscious of fate, upon the brink of a precipice, and is sad to see the beautiful smile upon the lip and in the eye, and know that by one false step or one act, it may be turned into tears. Like those who would hide the corpse of a murdered man from the eyes of his injured friends, we shun the sight of the sad, and strive to screen it from those it most concerns. But the life-blood of the victim was not heavily cut, and betrays still—and the secret cannot long be kept.

And then, in that pleasant breakfast-room, those three were trying to hide their sorrow from the unconscious woman whose every word was like a dagger thrust to their bleeding hearts.

"I have received a letter this morning in her room this morning as I left my own," she remarked. "I came down to the table expecting to find one of pleasant surprise, and now she is not here. My dear Margaret, you must scold her. It will not do to have her habituated to the comforts of home."

No one answered, and for the first time the ordeal commenced. Each one dreaded to utter a word. She looked at them anxiously.

"Good people—you seem grave and silent. In the name of God"—she added, with sudden terror—"what is the matter?"

"Can you have no idea?" asked Mrs. Brandon putting her arm around her waist.

"I can."

"Colonel Sair came down early this morning to tell us some terrible news, which has since been confirmed."

"Go on, Margaret, don't stop."

"Estelle has left home."

"What—has the bank failed, and all Ingear? Well, I can bear it."

"Oh, worse than that—far worse than that!"

"It is not about Justine," said Mrs. De Courcy, growing white to the very lips.

"Alas—it is!"

"I will not quickly."

"She has left us, Evelyn."

"Left us, Evelyn De Courcy, with a bewildered look. "It was only last night that I saw her alive and well."

"She is not dead, Evelyn."

"What then! why do you torment me in this way?" said Mrs. De Courcy, impatiently.

"I almost wish she was."

"If there is one in this room that loves me, let him or her speak, not sit as cruel," cried Mrs. De Courcy in a frenzy, unnatural voice.

Evelyn—she is gone!"

The unhappy mother uttered a faint cry, and fell back in her chair. But when they poured water her, she sustained them away.

"When did she go?"

"Last night, Evelyn."

"And while my kiss was yet warm upon her lips. Well, how will my poor husband act, this man, who has loved her from her and hours friends as his own child?"

"Estelle," said the indignant voice of Alfred, "has gone—your bosom friend."

"Yes—and yonder he smiles mockingly, at my anguish."

He pointed to the portrait. It was then the first time she had ever seen it. She started violently, gave a long, earnest look at it, and turning to him said with a trembling voice—

"Alfred—have some pity. Tell me that this is not the face of Estelle—that this is not the man she has taken my daughter away."

"Dear Madam, I cannot. It is Estelle."

"For God's sake, then, go home, and rob after them for life or death. Oh, this could not be! Heaven could not permit so fearful a crime."

"Perhaps we were hasty in our fears," said Mrs. Brandon, shocked at the sudden change in her face.

"Hide—ride, for life and death," she murmured, fiercely. "As for you, I think my heart is broken. I believe that I can die now."

"And will you try to follow my advice?"

"If I isn't something impossible. You are so well and energetic, always, that you cannot make allowance for my poor heart, and the annoyance of all those noisy children."

"Well, then, instead of giving you advice, Mrs. Wood, I will tell you something of my own history. There is a wider contrast, in every respect, between my 'now' and my 'then' than yours. Shall I tell you?"

"Oh, do, if you please. I shall like to hear that, for Edward was saying, only last night, that if I would but pattern by Mrs. Wilson, the less happy mother I soon could be. I hope I may learn and that was why I came to see you to-day, hoping that you could tell me something that might do me good."

"Your husband has probably a higher opinion of me than I deserve, but he knows, as I do, that nothing of worth can be gained without effort, or obtained after it has become ours. But to my little story:

"My home, in girlhood, was not like yours. It was a happy, pleasant home at one period, however, but was not had no luxuries, and whatever small comforts we had were the result of my father's care. My father was a farmer in a small way, cultivating a few acres of his own, and, sometimes, hard-hired from his wealthier neighbors. I was the only child, and, from my earliest remembrance, was accustomed to see my mother always busy, and I learned to assist her, when very young, at the lighter household tasks.

"As I grew older, I went to the little brown school-house every summer, a pupil of the 'mistress' who boarded with us for the time being; but winters I was detained home, on account of the distance and bad roads. A very fond of books, and read everything I could obtain, though I often had to work hard to get time for the enjoyment. My mother was anxious that I should prepare myself for a teacher, and was willing to work hard, and practice every kind-deal, that her object might be gained.

"I had nearly grown to womanhood, when my father was attacked by a severe illness that lasted many months, and from the effects of which he never fully recovered. This illness brought a heavy burden of labor upon my mother and myself, for, in the former thought of consolation, because we looked forward to the time when he would be able to work again, and place us once more among the toilers.

"But we were doomed to a bitter disappointment. My father recovered, in a great measure, his strength, but he seemed to have lost his old energy and spirit. Our little farm was not well cultivated, and he ceased to visit out his subsistence in other ways, and finally engaged with, for another our cows, horses, farming utensils, were sold to meet pressing emergencies, or to pay the interest accumulating on the mortgage. I was then sixteen and discouraged, and took to spending much of my time at the neighboring farm-houses, although he never tippled, he would sit all day, and sometimes every night with the men assembled at the place. The head-aches and side-aches, that made work impossible, grew more frequent, and my father's absence was found in a dram-shop, or the bar-room, or upon the tavern steep.

"I loved my mother's task and my own grew harder with this state of things. I could go to school no more, and was compelled to give up out to spinning, or worked in the dairy or kitchen of our wealthy neighbors, and gave my earnings into my father's hands. I was shut out from the society of books, and the privileges of acquiring knowledge in a public manner, though I often obtained help my purpose in view and learned all I could, by the kind assistance of the village teacher.

"It was a very proud day when, by the help and recommendation of some kind friends, I obtained a situation of teacher in a little district school a few miles distant from my home. Only a few of the children attended there in summer, and that I was thought competent for the position in winter, I felt surprised and disappointed. I found three years constantly taught and became very much attached to my wayward unsisterly little family at home. Of course three years were sufficient to make a little change in my father, and to speak of them. I was amply repaid for all by the power of making my parents comfortable.

"At the close of these years a better and terrible misfortune fell upon us. I have told you that my father frequented the tavern a great deal, but he had habit had all the while grown stronger and stronger, and I believe that he became more at home there than even in my own homestead.

"No sooner were we on the road than the whole character of my father changed, and day after day, he seemed to be under the influence of liquor. He had spent the two previous days, in company with a pair of ill-looking strangers, at the tavern, and I have since learned that he had obtained small on the night of the robbery, and, to add to the misfortune of the whole affair, the articles had been secreted on our premises. My father was already an inmate of the county jail, while his supposed accomplices had so far escaped pursuit.

"I found my mother, indeed, ill with grief and alarm; for though we had been poor no stain of dishonor had ever attached to our humble name. She could not deny that my father had returned home on the last night of a robbery, and more than usual, but, like me, she had the fullest confidence in his innocence. As soon as possible I left my own home and went away to visit my father in the jail. He was very glad to see me, and seemed relieved when I told him that I believed him I learned that the two strangers had talked with him a great deal about city life, and that they had invited him to join them, but that he had refused them very freely. On the night of the robbery they had requested him to show them the way to the next town, as it was quite dark, and, as he had engaged to meet them at midnight. He had walked with them a few miles, and then returned home, and while his supposed accomplices had so far escaped pursuit.

"I cannot tell you the details of the next few weeks' developments. I had some money, and kind friends lent or gave me more. With some trouble I procured employ for counsel, and then I needed for my father's ear, to guide me, I declared that he should be free. I had faith in my cause, and I could do myself, going twice to the city on the business. I worked very hard, went into some strange places, and did some strange things for a woman to do. But the result was that when the trial came on, in a few weeks, my father was acquitted, for I had found witnesses to prove where he was between the time of his leaving the tavern and his arrival at home, and the impossibility of his having been at the place of robbery. The two strangers, too, had been found in possession of some of the stolen property, and they were sentenced to the full penalty of the law.

"My father came home to die. Grief, and shame, and anxiety, aided by the discomforts of the jail, had done their work. He died and my mother soon followed him, and I was left alone. The sale of my little patrimony left me free from debt, and left a small overplus which I devoted to my long and hopelessly-desired object of attending a good school for a short time. I thought it the wisest mode of using the money, though some of my friends would have dissuaded me. But I was never sorry, for by the few months' education that I obtained I became competent to teach a school of young ladies, which I soon after opened in a large village near my former home.

"I have been there for nearly twelve years, and have I made the acquaintance of Mr. Wilson. After we had known each other for some time, he proposed to me and I accepted him. Not long after I was informed, by one of those individuals who spend much of their time in tattling into the affairs of others, that he had, at some period, been addicted to the use of liquor, but that his reformation was coupled with the advice to break off the engagement.

"I thought much and deeply of what I had heard. Though Mr. Wilson was then, as I was myself, temperate, and had been so for years, yet I saw that with his generous nature and strong social tendencies, he was liable to temptation from which characters less sensitively loveable were exempt. I did not need then to be told that my influence over him was almost unbounded. I enjoyed myself if I were strong enough to lead him in the right direction, and I had the power to so study and conform to his tastes as to make home more attractive than any other place, and if I loved him so well that, under all circumstances, I could make my society pleasanter to him than any other. But the reason I was told that I would try.

"I more than once I was warned, for the tale of some wild freak of his early youth had followed him to the village, was known to almost all his home there, but I thought I had studied his character better and more thoroughly than any one else, and I felt perfectly assured that it was my mission to become his wife. Don't laugh, Mrs. Wood, at my romantic ideas. I am not ashamed to own that I love and believed, deserves evidence of such a passion, had I resolved never to become what most girls think themselves called to perform when they marry. I married not only because I expected to secure a happier home, but because I loved him more than ever I was before, but because I felt that the power of influencing him for good was a special Providence, of 'saving a soul from death.'

"We were married in June, and I almost forgot my fears. Mr. Wilson was always at home, or in my company, except when business, to which he was strictly attentive, called him away. I felt a little foolish at times, and as if in a sort of mock heroism I had sacrificed myself to my husband, when I saw how good and noble my husband was, as those traits were revealed more and more, and I could drive me ever nearer to him in the true marriage bond.

"But when we had been married a year I had a long, lingering sickness. After all danger was past, and I was able to no longer confined, I remained in a feeble, sickly state, unable to act or think for myself, and my husband was my all. I entered myself in my accustomed pursuits. It was at this period that my husband began first to absent himself from home, and no longer possessed his wonted attentions. I missed him, but was too feeble to make any complaint, and too much occupied or enquiring the cause.

"My physician had often said that I needed something to arouse me, and it came when my husband was brought home to me, one night, intoxicated. I had retired, and, after a restless and troubled fortune, from a tavern brawl. He had been thrown from his horse, and was brought home to seek the companionship of three whose society he could not do his wife.

"I could not make you comprehend, Mrs. Wood, the trials, and the sorrows, and the efforts of the next few years. Some of them were painful, and never faltered. My work lay before me, and I gave myself to it. My husband's habits grew worse—so bravely, side by side, my husband working in his office, and I at home—took, and nursery maid, and household cares, and, as I said, I cannot the less happy for that, because it was for him and his children that I labored.

"Now we have a competence again, and do not need to work as we have done. I have been through sickness sometimes comes to us, and death has robbed us of one dear child. My husband suffers all in his power to make little relief for the struggles and trials he underwent in freeing himself from the shackles of the habit, and all he suffered but a fit penance for the crime of yielding to temptation.

"I have told you this, Mrs. Wood, only to show what even a woman may do by effort—to show you what I was, and what responsibilities that rest upon us in every situation of life, and most of all upon the wife voluntarily as my husband's, take into our keeping the happiness of others. If you will but learn from my simple story that effort, and the exercise of the qualities which secure us happiness here, my object will have been entirely accomplished, and I shall feel myself richly repaid for the pain in the days of your girlhood."

GRATEFUL.

Oh! the world, the world is beautiful
The earth, and there rain's careful mood,
And he is happy who can find
To gather wisdom from a flower,
And make his memory bear
Its pleasant gratitude.

THE DUELIST'S CODE.

A Message, without a Word, to the Enemy.
The weakest frailty of a better mind.

The only public a Christian and a gentleman are made inconsistent appellations of the same person; you are not to expect eternal life, if you are not religious; you are not mortal, if you are immortals if you are not ready to commit a murder is recognized for an affront. A man of sense and well as religion is at utterly banished the world, that men glory in their very pestilent, and pernicious trifles with the utmost vengeance; so little do they know that to forgive is the most serious and noble pitch human nature can arrive at. A coward has often fought, a coward has often conquered, but "a coward never forgave." The power of doing that flows from a strength of soul conscious of his own force; whence it draws a certain safety which is every it not of consideration enough to interrupt; for it is peculiar in the make of a brave man to have his friends seem much above him, his enemies much below him.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

AFFINITY.

BY MARY FORREST.

"Number thy hours of love, and I will know
How many such I can redeem at Go-dess,
And bless me as their herald!"

Be noble to your friendships;
Nothing — dream it —
Around the spirit's channel
Is more than friendship deep;
Let them be rich in confidence —
Let them be great and true,
With a strong and holy purpose,
Who take of the flesh with you.

Be careful in your friendships,
For Go-dess you have to thank,
Who, from a long chaotic
Your Sophos He endows;
Link not a mere pretender
To the purified chain you hold,
Nor stake your spirit's union
With a worthless mate untrothed.

A spurious pin cannot
Be thro' covered you wear,
Before to blended prayer,
And stamps new beauty there;
While the glow of pure and solid
Outdraws the purer rays,
And o'er your proud days
An envious mockery plays.

Be earnest in your friendships!
Approach with holy care
Each locked and sealed casket,
And the mysteries shrined there;
Ain't never a word unspoken —
Never a thought uttered,
For the beloved and mated
The familial soul affined!

In regard to your friendships!
Gather a noble few
Around this clear fountain;
To drink of the heavens' Kee;
For one of the ether's Ar-cana
Spring the Phœn-ix' ash-es
Into the round o'er eternal cosmos.

New York, 1857.

KARMEL THE SCOUT;

THE REZEL OF THE JERSEYS.

A STORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "THE RUNAWAYS OF BOSTON," "THE MAID OF THE MILL," "THE GIPSY'S WARNING," ETC., ETC.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1857 by Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CONCLUSION.

"Arthur Lincoln," spoke the maid, as soon as all was hushed; "what was the work you had in hand when we entered?"

"Do you believe I will answer your questions for the basest returned. "Who gave you the right to come here and catechise me?"

"By what right?" O—Arthur Lincoln, can you still hope to avoid me? Can you hope longer to avoid the punishment you have found since you first saw me in this very room last winter?"

"How now, foul Rebel? Have you come here to be conjured up with which to blacken my character?"

Words? cried Karmel, indignantly; have you the audacity to speak such an that? *Me deer! Parrots!*"

As these words dropped sternly from the youth's lips, Sir Arthur started up from his chair, and then back again. His face had turned to an ashen hue, and his limbs trembled violently.

"Liar!" he gasped, between his firmly-set teeth. "Go on, boy!" said Karmel, with a bitter smile upon his lips. "You do not look like an injured man."

"Out, vile dog! I know the lie then back coolest up to your own. I say it is your ugly face which I first met me. Then I saw that look in his face, and in his teeth?"

"Say on, Sir Arthur. But I tell my story to these people, nevertheless, rather, as I am in their power."

Captain Pemberton arose and left the room, and when he returned he was followed by Eugene Debois and half a dozen soldiers.

These latter men were members of Eugene's company. He went to Amboy for he left them at Newark; and when they found he did not return, as he said he would, part of the company came to New Brunswick in search of him. They arrived on the previous evening, and having come on to spend morning just in season to see their former captain ride into the village, with his lady-love and two male companions. They were mounted, well and strong; and as they entered the parlor they arranged themselves in the door.

"Now, Arthur Lincoln," said the scout, "I will tell you a simple story."

"Ho—go on. Tis a brave thing to flatten me, and then call your own audience to hear them spoken?"

"Never mind," returned Karmel, not at all moved by the scorn of the other. "We'll go on. First, I would ask you if you remember Walter Marshall?"

Lincoln started at the sound of that name, but he managed to keep his countenance as it was—and that was bad enough.

"Gentlemen," resumed the scout, turning towards the guard, "Colonel Eugene Debois will come forward, "many years ago there were two boys growing up very near together in a sea-coast borough of England. Arthur Lincoln was the son of a titled father, while Walter Marshall was only the child of a retired merchant. Both of these youths were wealthy. As they—the boys—approached the age of manhood Walter Marshall became possessed of character in his friend which he did not like; yet he overlooked them all until a circumstance transpired which served to sever the bonds of friendship forever.

"Lord Lincoln died. When he was buried—on the very day of his burial—news came from India that his eldest son was dead. This was Arthur left the sole heir to those vast estates. In the evening Walter called upon the young man, and we he left he knew that Arthur Lincoln had murdered his own father!"

"Liar!" shouted the baronet, springing to his feet. "It is false!—false as the very father of lies!"

"Bind you," continued the scout, still speaking as before, and seeming to pay no attention to the words just uttered, "Walter Marshall had been to London with Arthur only a few weeks before, and was then cognizant of all the preparations for the murder, which was done by poison! Still he would not have been certain of the crime had not the particulars with his own lips confessed it!"

"Base liar! he did not confess it!" gasped Sir Arthur.

"He spoke very much like it," resumed Karmel. "He offered to tell Walter how he could avoid his father-off in the same way that Walter did that. The evidence upon which Walter Marshall based his decision was more than circumstantial. It was positive; and from that time he could not associate with his friend as he had been wont to do. Arthur soon saw it—he saw that he was avoided—and shortly afterwards Walter received a note from him to this effect. 'I know you suspect me of crime. If you breathe a word to a living soul on the subject you will die!' twelve hours thereafter. I have engaged one to keep close to the point now.'

"Walter read the letter, and then tore it up. Shortly after this Arthur went to London, and there he plunged into dissipation. He went mad.

"Meanwhile Walter was married. He married a girl whom he had long loved, and who, he felt, would make him happy. Her name was Ellen Hunt. A few days together as husband and wife could be, and a child—a daughter—was born unto them. At the end of this time Walter's father died, and the son was obliged, a month afterwards, to go into England on business.

"While he was gone Arthur Lincoln returned from London. And here let me say what Walter had not known. Ellen had once loved Arthur Lincoln; but on account of his habits her parents had turned upon him, and she had ceased to think or forgotten him! Had her parents allowed her to reject him of their own accord, and had Arthur not sent him off, and she never lost her pity for him.

"And during the young husband's absence Arthur Lincoln succeeded in stilled in a single first as a friend—and she did not turn him away. He came again—again. By and by from that he gained the language of friendship, and took up the lover's plea! It did not do. Ellen Marshall knew he worked upon her pity, and she sympathized with him. He saw her weakness, and he followed it up. With consummate skill he touched her best strings; and finally she beat before him. It was a long time in his part, but he accomplished it at length. Poor Ellen Marshall had become a maniac under his influence! the soft, mild voice of the tongue had turned her heart, and the confidence which he won in her presence, and when he was upon his knees praying to her, stilled away the virtue of her soul!"

"Also! in evil hour the young wife consented to flee with her seducer! He sold her of the love hand across the sea, and gained her vows and boons they would have there. He had money yet —much money. His child was dead, and all the money was already on his way in the Colonies of America. And yet that money was not legally his. In the meantime some of the spoil of his had squandered all. His whole estate had been seized and held under the title-deeds of a youth of whom who was drunk, and then bartered home and sold them to a nobleman who had been long and anxious to buy.

"The young mother could not leave her child. She begged her to do so, and to flee with him; that, and he yielded.

"And they came to America. A short time Ellen lived a life of wild excitement, and then the evil hour began its sorrows. A year passed, and Arthur Lincoln lost his love, and began to hate. Ellen was no more pitying; no more smiling; no more peaceful. Her sadness chilled her, and he could not bear it—much longer

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

AT REST.

BY ALICE CARY.

The hand was toward the West,
And her baby on her breast,
All still white
Her black hair fell apart,
From her forehead cold and white,
Like a shadow from the light,
On the mother's breast below,
White she died.

From her by my little hands
I untied the clothes that bound
Her feet,
Since I slipped soft as wind;
And I sewed a shroud
With a thy and her face,
And dressed and laid them all,
Very sweet.

Shall I not yet, I say glad?
For the dead are never sad—
None so fair
Would the plainness of her frock,
That were only name of fear
Look not darkly from her gray;
And the prying and the peep,
All were o'er.

FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 17.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER P. DURLAP.

SHOOTING A SWIVEL.

We had had a hard day's work, and had accomplished just nothing at all. Ben had shot a deer, but—I don't know what it was, as I did not see it; but from his description of it I supposed it must have been a turkey buzzard. He shot the bird, and it fell among some bushes. He went to the place, and the bird had gone off. He gave chase, and after following it nearly half a mile, he managed to catch it. Old Pharaoh was with him, and as he got the game within his power he ghoulishly mauled it.

"Guess 'what good for nuff'n, ole fellow," said the cook.

"Just you wait."

"But it smells strong," pursued Fitz.

"I differ," cried Ben.

"It's nuff'n but skin, and feathers, and bone," suggested the persistent darkey.

"It makes very difference," returned Ben.

"You'll cook it, or ever gone your gig?"

As Ben spoke he held the bird by the huge tail-feathers; and while he shook the game in Fitzdom's face, the broad wings flapped away, but with one unearthly yell, the dismally-caught buzzard gave a spring, and away he went, leaving the tail feathers in the hand of Ben, and quite making foolishly after the swiftly-departing evidence of his skill.

After supper, while we were mousing over the fruitless result of our day's hunting, Ben took up the story of Sim's bastard. This brought us to good humor, and as soon as the laugh, which had been raised at Ben's expense, subsided, we had Hobson spoke:

"Well, boys," he said, "as humor seems to be the order of the evening, suppose I tell you about a comical affair that came under my own observation some time since?"

We told him to go ahead, and thus bidden he went on as follows:—

"Some years ago—but not many, however—I kept a hotel at Head Tide, on the State of Vermont. It was at the Yankee end of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad. It was a very full stand, and we had no reason to complain of the amount of custom; but I didn't exactly fancy the country near the climate. The winters were always too cold for comfort, and the summers were no better than could be found elsewhere.

"Among the various things which we had for the amusement of our patrons were two black bears, between two and three years old. They had been taken in a cage-trap by my partner when quite young, and had therefore brought up on our place. They were very playful, and never illnatured if they were not teased. Mahala were plenty in the neighborhood, but we had never yet given them any fresh meat. They were too cute to make 'em savage. At all events, we gave them so much bread and vegetables as they could eat, and the result was that they had fat and sleek skins which you see in large boots that are full on game. They would play with any one, though, some-times rather roughly.

"One day in August, among the travellers who stopped at our hotel was a queer-looking chap, who seemed prepared to take the whole place by storm. As he entered the office he came down into a carpet-bag, upon the other a game-bag, upon his right shoulder a double-barrelled gun, upon his left a double-barrelled fowling-piece, while strapped to his back was a dilapidated knapsack, and suspended to a patent-leather belt about his waist was a huge bowie-knife. Behind him came our porter with a common gimcrack, another carpet-bag, a fishrod, and a pistol-box.

"You may think from this that the man who owned all this was a huge, savage-looking fellow. If you do you must change the theory for the comical chap all over. His body was rather thin, and had a kind of lopsided bend to it sideways—just as though one was heavier than the other. His legs were bowed, but not in nor out; they bowed backwards, so that when he walked they seemed almost ready to collapse, or fold up the wrong way. And then his head was set upon him in a savage-looking face. His head was rather long and narrow; his ears standing out some; his eyes —very sensitive, each eyelid, by the way, being only half the face, and I verily believe you could have hung a hat on either one of his ears. His nose was a monstrous nose. *He* said 'twas a Roman nose. But it was really necessary to fill up the face.

"He wrote his name in the register—'Jr. Tenus Bunker, M. D.' I looked at it a long time, and wondered what it could mean. That 'Jr.' puzzled me. But my partner, whom some one called Hickey, said there was an American somewhere in my navy named 'Ap. Catesby Jones;' but this didn't satisfy me; and so the first favorable opportunity I asked him. It was just after supper. I was alone in the office, and he came in for a cigar. I opened the register, and then held him I didn't wish to be impudent, but I had curiosity to know if the 'Jr.' at the commencement of his name was a real Christian appellation.

"'Ah,' he said, throwing himself into a comical attitude, and poising on a most knowing look. 'That same thing bamyoked Bonnaparte—Bonaparte.' It is not a Christian appellative, sir, but is a signification of case of my profession. As you will see, by the last part of my name, I am a physician, sir—a *physician, sir!* And I no name it as an apothecary, sir,—an *apothecary!* It is no important profession, sir,—an important profession; as the lives of thousands may depend upon the skill with which the professional dispenser of drugs, chemicals, guinines, minerals, and medicines may compound his prescriptions, prescriptions, sir, which are to kill or to cure!—*to kill or to cure, sir!* Apothecary, sir, is the word. Yocus is the American cognomen given me by my worthy father, sir. Bunker has a deeper signification, sir. You may have heard of Bunker of Hayesburg—the first of that mighty American house, sir. *His* name was Rudolf—my name is Rudolf. I leave you to draw your own conclusion, sir.'

"That I just about the way he spoke; and with that he lit his cigar and walked off. I made up my mind very much touching his character. That evening he asked me if there was any game about the place. I told him there was plenty of it: and he then informed me that he intended to spend some time there. He said he was an experienced hunter, and had come up there partly to get away from the worry of the world, sir. I have done with that sort of thing, sir, and I am now the happy possessor of his property, sir.'

"I allow no one to go ahead of me in the use of firearms, sir; I by—God, sir, I shoot a hundred wild beasts in all parts